

Gay Community News

THE NATIONAL LESBIAN AND GAY WEEKLY SINCE 1973

OCTOBER 27- NOVEMBER 2, 1991

VOLUME 19 NO.15

NON-PROFIT BIPAD: 65498

\$1.25

JUSTICE TRAVAILS



Will the real Uncle Thomas please stand up

By Fran White

Anyone who had an emotional stake in the Hill-Thomas debacle had many occasions to feel anger. I felt my anger turned in many directions, but ultimately fixed on African-American nationalism. I have always felt that nationalists understand the politics of mobilization better than do African-Americans of any other political position. For this reason, I have looked gratefully to them for educating our communities about crucial race issues. But over the Long Embattled Weekend, I kept hitting up against the limitations of nationalist discourses and the way their contradictions serve to obscure too much that we need to understand.

By nationalism I mean the hegemonic ideology in the African-American community that helps make sense of racism and defines Black identity. Like all such ideologies, it illuminates some things and obscures others. It defines acceptable Black behavior and can be expressed in everything from rap music to Spike Lee's movies to radio talk shows. I don't see nationalism as equivalent to separatism, especially in this age when some of us live in segregated society and others of us live and/or work in integrated society.

It may seem unfair that I here single out African-American nationalists for my anger. After all, white liberals failed us in a big way. The liberals' inability to speak to race issues was disheartening. With supporters like these, I'm sure Hill wondered who needs enemies. As just one example, the Democrats allowed Hill's corroborating witnesses to appear Sunday morning when Black people were in church or going about their Sunday morning duties. Initially I was interested to notice that many Black people I spoke with thought that the Black witnesses represented

Continued on page 6

When the best isn't good enough

By Dawn Schmitz

It should have been a best-case scenario for a sexual harassment claim. The woman making the allegations exhibited the qualities our culture demands in a "believable" person. She was highly educated, attractive, articulate and had an unblemished record. Her allegations were substantiated. She had no political or personal motivation to lie. In fact, her career would suffer from having come forward. She had no record of undergoing any psychiatric care or counseling. She was a bible-toting Christian.

Yet she was not believed. Her character was torn to shreds on national television while the U.S. public watched with satisfaction from malls, bars and living-rooms. If we are to believe the polls, there is not a single racial, sexual, age or educational category of people who believe she was telling the truth.

Because in reality, of course, nothing could overcome the fact that she was a woman and she was African American, testifying in front of the most elite group of wealthy white men in the world.

For many of us who began listening to Anita Hill's testimony with a dread mixed with only the tiniest glimmer of unjustified hope, the outcome is no surprise.

Indeed, the hearings served as a crash-course in how to tear apart the testimony of any woman bringing charges of sexual harassment, sexual assault or even domestic abuse—or any witnessless crime committed by a man against a woman. They said she was a liar, making up stories that could never have happened because they are too terrible to be believed; they accused her of living in a fantasy world brought about by unrequited love; and they said she was an unreasonably ambitious "career woman" bent on destroying anyone who got in her way.

The committee members cited Hill's circumstances, behaviors and actions—entirely consistent with instances of sexual harassment—to prove no harassment existed. And it worked. In effect, Hill was not believed because she gave a truthful account of harassment and had acted like many victims of harassment do.

Senators began by feigning incredulity at the specifics of the charges. Most clearly articulated by Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah), the senators' insinuation was that anyone who would say the things Hill alleged of Thomas—statements not atypical of an account of verbal sexual harassment—couldn't be said by any "ordinary" man outside of a mental health facility. "[T]he person who would do something like that over a period of time," Hatch said, "it seems to me, would be a psychopathic sex fiend or a

Continued on page 6

Invisibility at the Intersections

By Rebecca O. Johnson

Over the weekend of the Anita Hill hearings I sat at home tightly gripping all the intersections of my life. I didn't want to disappear like Anita Hill. Oh, she didn't fall apart. She faded away. Here was a woman who had carefully cultivated manners, education, skills and demeanor. All this was meaningless in the face of her situation. A Black woman being questioned by 14 white men about sex and her sexual harassment by a Black man.

As those white, middle-aged, owner-class men questioned her, she was merely a woman. She was not Black like Clarence Thomas was Black. Her vocal supporters outside the hearing room were primarily white women who never acknowledged her blackness. (For more on this, read *All The Women are White, All The Blacks are Men, But Some of Us are Brave*.)

I could feel the carefully darned seams of my Black feminist identity being picked at, slowly unravelling, dissolving because there was no context for acknowledging the fullness of her life experience, and by extension, mine.

There was no public forum which acknowledged Anita Hill is Black and a woman. No one said to the vocal Republicans and the complicit Democrats that their characterization of Anita Hill as scorned, conniving, demented was in the best racist tradition of labelling strong, serious Black women as castrating bitches.

Further, there was no organized African American opposition saying, when it counted, "This man is lying, he has been lying all along." Why should his disclaimers have credibility now when much of his pronouncements during the earlier confirmation hearing were a dodge, a deception, a lie?

Citizens of the United States lost the Supreme Court when David Souter became an Associate Justice. The nomination of Clarence Thomas was never about excellence on the Supreme Court. It was a cynical demonstration of how well owning-class men understand the weak wills of progressive activists and the siege mentality of African Americans. We all fell into the game, played by the owners' rules and lost.

We didn't lose a Supreme Court seat. That was never ours to win. What we lost was the ability to address issues of sexual and

Continued on page 6

PIXIE LEROUX

Quote of the Week

"Who could resist my steamy, hot coos?"
—Sandra Bernhard, in response to the tired questions about her past relationship to Madonna, as part of her show "Giving 'Til It Hurts." Can we move on now, please?

HUD reverses opposition to AIDS housing

BOSTON—Funding for local AIDS housing, stalled last month by Housing and Urban Development (HUD), will now be granted, due in part to lobbying on the part of AIDS and housing advocacy groups and state officials. HUD had originally withheld the funding on the grounds that the housing, designed specifically for people with AIDS (PWAs), discriminates against people with other disabilities.

Following an ACT UP take-over of their regional offices Oct. 3, and letters of opposition from Gov. William Weld and the director of the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, HUD announced Oct. 22 that it would reverse its decision, dropping its claim of discrimination and allowing 17 of the proposed 52 units of housing to go forward. Under the new agreement, the housing must be advertised as providing "services for [people with any kind of] immunological dysfunction." HUD described only minor holdups on funding for the remaining units.

—Dawn Schmitz

Lesbian ex-lovers dispute property in high court

ATLANTA—The Georgia Supreme Court heard arguments Sept. 23 in a property dispute between two lesbian ex-lovers who had signed a joint property agreement.

According to the *Dallas Voice*, Patricia Gagne Gilden and Florence Crooke, who began their relationship in 1982, retained a lawyer who drafted a joint property agreement. Under the agreement, Gilden was granted one-half ownership of Crooke's house, and all property owned by the women prior to the agreement or acquired during their relationship became joint property, to be divided equally between them.

In 1989, Gilden and Crooke broke off their relationship. Crooke subsequently refused to give Gilden the one-half share of the couple's home and property, arguing that the contract was unenforceable because their lesbian relationship violated Georgia public policy and criminal statutes.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Operation Rescue demos barred

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—A temporary injunction barring Operation Rescue and others from blockading abortion clinics in Massachusetts was made permanent Oct. 17. A superior court judge ruled that Operation Rescue's threatening and intimidating tactics violate state civil rights laws by interfering with the rights of women seeking health care.

The ruling came just two weeks before Operation Rescue is scheduled to descend on Boston-area abortion clinics Nov. 2. Members of the group have vowed to defy the order. Pro-choice organizations are mobilizing to defend the clinics, and to hold police accountable for upholding the injunction.

If members of Operation Rescue, Pro-Life Action Network of Arlington or any one of 65 of their members block or obstruct access to any facility providing abortion counseling or services, they face a maximum penalty of two and one half years in prison, a \$5000 fine or both.

—Dawn Schmitz

Nurse secretly tested for HIV

SANTA ROSA, Calif.—A nurse who was rejected for life insurance filed suit against the insurance company because underwriters there surreptitiously tested her for HIV.

According to the *Bay Area Reporter*, the nurse—who applied last year to the Knights of Columbus Insurance Co. for a policy—said she was shocked to receive a rejection letter telling her she was HIV positive.

Life insurers in California must obtain signed consent forms from applicants they want to test for HIV, under a 1989 act of the California Legislature. Insurance companies are also supposed to make post-test counseling available to tested applicants.

"These guys didn't do any of this," said Alice Philipson, a Berkeley attorney who is defending the woman. "My client considered suicide as a result of this letter from hell."

The plaintiff, a former nurse of six years, attributed needle stick accidents as the probable source of her HIV infection. She quit nursing upon learning she was HIV positive and is working with the Sonoma Valley HIV support network.

The nurse is asking for both punitive and exemplary damages in a case that should be heard within the year. "The purpose is to never have this happen again," Philipson said.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Virginia allows gay bars

ALEXANDRIA, Va.—State officials and attorneys for northern Virginia's first gay cafe expect to be in federal court here next week to sign a formal agreement that effectively repeals a law that bans gay bars in the Commonwealth.

Alcoholic Beverage Control Board (ABC) officials agreed Oct. 18 that the ban is unconstitutional and will no longer be enforced. As part of the agreement, the state will advise all current bar owners of the change and pay legal fees for plaintiffs who sued to overturn the ban.

Gay bars had been able to operate in Virginia's major cities for 10 years because the Attorney General's office had told the ABC to ignore the law's ban on gay bars since it may not be constitutional, an aide to Attorney General Mary Sue Terry said.

But ABC chair George M. Hampton Sr. said he was being pressured to enforce the law because of complaints in May over two large sketches of male nudes in a gay cafe.

The law allowed suspension or revocation of a liquor license for any place that is a "meeting place or rendezvous" for drunks, gamblers, homosexuals and other unpopular groups, and prohibited "immoral, lewd [or] obscene... conduct [or]... pictures." The French Quarter Cafe, William and Mary College alumni, and Dale Barnhard, who was ejected from a bar for dancing with another woman, sued in U.S. District Court as a "pre-emptive strike" after state officials visited the cafe a second time.

The ABC decision complies with this city's Human Rights Code, amended in 1989 to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, including in places of public accommodation.

—John Zeh

AIDS scandal in France

PARIS—The French government may have caused untold numbers of people to contract HIV disease by delaying the screening of blood banks through a U.S. HIV blood test for five months in 1985, according to the summary of a French government report printed in the Sept. 19 issue of *Nature*. The author of the report has charged French government officials with prioritizing economic and nationalistic concerns over those of public health.

The investigative report was prompted by lawsuits filed by French families of hemophiliacs who died of AIDS, and by the protest resignation last summer of the director of the national blood transfusion center.

Based on transcripts from government meetings and internal documents, the report concluded that officials disregarded knowledge of contaminated blood supplies and growing infection rates in order to prevent US drug companies from monopolizing the French market for an HIV test.

Michael Lucas, government inspector for social affairs and author of the report, suggested that officials as high up as then-Prime Minister Laurent Fabius may have been involved in decisions to delay approval of the U.S. HIV test to give French researchers a chance to develop one of their own. The report suggested that officials were put off by the high cost of screening all blood donations.

The report will be sent to France's current health minister, Brunno Durieux, who is expected to turn it over to the justice ministry, where it will be decided if any legal action should be taken.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Navy apologizes to Hartwig family

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Navy publicly apologized Oct. 17 for wrongfully accusing sailor Clayton V. Hartwig of causing the 1989 explosion aboard the USS Iowa—which killed Hartwig and 46 others—because he was a spurned, suicidal homosex-

ual.

Admiral Frank Kelso, chief of Naval Operations, admitted that there is no "clear and convincing evidence" that the Iowa blast "was a wrongful, intentional act by anyone. I extend my sincere regrets to the family of Hartwig and others," he said.

"I have no evidence to tell me [Hartwig] was a homosexual," Kelso admitted to CBS news. The public apology pleased Hartwig's mother, but she said she will proceed with her \$40 million lawsuit against the Navy, because of "emotional distress" to her family.

Navy brass had leaked allegations that Hartwig was an "unstable" closeted gay man who had ignited the explosion in an act of suicide over a romantic break up with another sailor, Kendall Truitt.

The Navy had probed Truitt's relationship with Hartwig after learning that Truitt was sole beneficiary to Hartwig's \$100,000 life insurance policy. Truitt, who was not injured in the explosion and was never formally implicated, said, "this whole thing has cost me my marriage, my job and my reputation."

CBS News charged that the Navy "leaked false, derogatory information about Hartwig to shift blame away from safety problems with the Iowa's guns and gunpowder."

Kelso conceded that the Navy's original investigation, a second probe by a private firm, and another ordered by a House subcommittee had cost taxpayers \$25 million.

—John Zeh

Pink Panthers' name revoked

NEW YORK—A federal court judge ordered New York City's gay and lesbian anti-violence patrol to stop calling itself the Pink Panther Patrol in a preliminary injunction Oct. 3, while the court decides whether the use of the name infringes on a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer (MGM) Studios trademark. The patrol may, however, continue to use its characteristic paw print insignia.

The MGM suit against the Pink Panther Patrol charges that the group infringed upon a trademark used by the studio in eight movies and a cartoon series. Studio attorneys argued that the Pink Panther trademark—which they describe as promoting "an image of lighthearted, non-political, asexual, amicable comic entertainment"—had been damaged by the patrol's use of the name. Judge Pierre N. Leval agreed that confusion between the names might constitute grounds for trademark infringement.

Evan Wolfson, one the patrol's attorneys at the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund, told *GCN* there is no evidence the MGM trademark has been confused with or damaged by the patrol's name. "The name Pink Panther Patrol does not come from the cartoon Pink Panther," Wolfson told *GCN*. "It reflects the tradition of advocacy of groups like the Gray Panthers and the Black Panthers, and pink has become the traditional color used to identify the gay and lesbian movement."

Wolfson said that patrol attorneys are talking with MGM attorneys about the possibility of dropping the lawsuit if the patrol agrees to alter its name. "[With] the rising tide of anti-gay and -lesbian violence in the streets, there is a limit to how much energy you can

spend on a trademark battle," Wolfson said.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Doctor's safe-sex posters okay

OKLAHOMA CITY—A gay physician who displayed safer-sex AIDS prevention posters was cleared on charges of displaying "indecent materials," Oct. 2.

Larry Prater, M.D., operates several anonymous HIV test sites in the Oklahoma City area. Early last June, two vice officers entered one of Prater's clinics and told volunteers if they did not remove two safer-sex posters displayed in the clinic's street windows, they would be subject to arrest on obscenity charges. One poster depicted the hip area of two men and had AIDS prevention in English and Spanish. The other showed two naked African-American men embracing, one wearing a condom.

"Hundreds of guys walk by the door on the way to the bars," Prater told *GCN* of the clinic site, located between two gay bars in Oklahoma City's most densely populated gay neighborhood. "This type of poster lets people know we offer anonymous testing and we are accepting of gay men." Prater estimated that, of an estimated 40,000 gay men in the Oklahoma City area, only 4,000 have been tested.

Prater's case was heard in an Oklahoma City court, where he pleaded not guilty, provided eight witnesses who testified to the benefit of the posters and was judged not guilty.

The possibility that city attorneys may again charge Prater with the same offense has caused the Oklahoma ACLU to say it will file a federal suit sometime next week to enjoin the city from further prosecution in the matter.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Adrienne Rich and Marge Piercy honored

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—Lesbian poets Adrienne Rich and Marge Piercy were honored here Oct. 15. Rich was honored as the 1991 Golden Rose Poet; Marge Piercy, last year's Golden Rose Award recipient, was honored with the May Sarton Award. The Sarton Award is given intermittently to a poet whose work is an inspiration to other poets. Piercy turned over the Golden Rose to Rich calling her "one of our treasures."

—Marge Doyle

John Brown Awards

NEW YORK—Former Black Panther Geronimo ji-Jaga Pratt, who was convicted of murder and has been incarcerated in California for over 20 years, received one of the John Brown Society's first annual gold medals Oct. 16 in New York *The Guardian* reported.

The other recipient is Robert F. Williams, author of *Negroes with Guns* and a prominent leader of the 1950s civil rights struggle in North Carolina. Edward Zwick, director of the film *Glory*, and the John Brown Historical Society of Chicago will receive silver medals for contributions to the study of militant abolitionism.

—Carrie Wofford

FOR THE ACTIVIST IN YOU

National

- Academic lesbians: the Modern Language Association's Commission on the Status on Women wants statements on intellectual/ sexual harassment of lesbians in academe for a collection, *Anti-Feminist Harassment in the Academy*. Write: Prof. Greta Gaard, Dept. of Composition, 420 Humanities Bldg., Univ. of Minnesota, Duluth, MN 55812.
- Queer students/youth: Be an intern 20 hours/week with the Human Rights Campaign Fund in Wash., D.C. Three positions open for winter. Application deadline Nov. 1. Call Anne Theisen (202)-628-4160; write 1012 14th St. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Local

- "Say no to Wichita in Boston"—protect abortion clinics from Operation Rescue's plan to shut them down Nov. 2. If your last name begins with A-F go to Preterm Clinic, 1842 Beacon St. (Cleveland Cir.); G-L go to Repro Assoc., 1297 Beacon St (Coolidge Corner); M-R go to Planned Parenthood, 1031 Beacon St.; and S-Z go to Gynecare Clinic, 177 Tremont St., (Boylston T). Also Crittendon Clinic, 10 Perthshire Road. Brighton. Info: NOW (617)782-1056; Reproductive Rights Network (617)738-9479.
- Legal observers needed to monitor police who take condoms from sex workers between Oct. 28 and Nov. 5 Info: Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, Denise McWilliams (617)426-1350.
- Phone zap Gov. Weld, demand that medicaid not be cut for people aged 18-21 (PWA's would be affected). Info: (617)49ACTUP.
- Phone zap the Andover town manager, Reginald Stapczynski (508) 470-3800 for comments made Oct. 10 by Andover health director Everett Penney that AIDS will stop when homosexuality is treated as an objective disorder. Info: (617)49ACTUP.
- Michael Cronin's campaign wants you for visibility Wed., Nov. 4, 4-6:30 p.m. Tremont and Mass. Ave, intersection. Info: (617)536-0012.
- Rally for breast cancer, "Stop the Epidemic" Sun. Oct. 27, noon, Boston Common. Info: FCHC (617)267-0900.

Got activist news? Call (617)426-4469; fax 426-2723.

--Carrie Wofford



Queer contingent joins march for Puerto Rican political prisoner Independentistas

Queers march to free Puerto Rico

Lesbian/gay contingent joins DC demo for political prisoner amnesty

By Bob Lederer

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A highly visible lesbian and gay contingent joined a march on the White House Oct. 12 demanding amnesty for imprisoned Puerto Rican pro-independence activists. The demonstration, part of an ongoing campaign backed by all organizations advocating independent nationhood for the Caribbean island, drew over 2000 people, primarily Puerto Ricans from Northeast and Midwest U.S. cities. Several European and Asian countries held simultaneous pickets and teach-ins on the same issue.

The march and rally held through cold rain focused on the demand to release 18 activists—considered by the independence movement as either political prisoners or prisoners of war (POWs)—subjected to near-life sentences and serious mistreatment in U.S. prisons for their public or underground resistance to U.S. colonial control over Puerto Rico.

The queer contingent of 25 Latino and white activists was led by a colorful banner reading "Lesbians and Gay Men Demand U.S. Out of Puerto Rico" and emblazoned with a pink triangle, a labrys and a Puerto Rican flag. Participating groups included the Co-Conspirators of Chicago and the New York-based Lesbian and Gay Folks Supporting Political Prisoners. Both do education and organizing primarily in the white lesbian/gay community around a variety of U.S. political prisoner cases. There were also several members of the ACT UP/NY Latina/Latino Caucus and many unaffiliated individuals.

Queer activists honored

The Lesbian and Gay Folks group distributed a flyer to marchers noting the long involvement of North American queers in Puerto Rico solidarity work, and specifically honoring two: political prisoner Susan Rosenberg, a New York anti-imperialist organizer and later underground activist serving 58 years for bomb possession; and David Stern, an active member of the Free Puerto Rico Committee, Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, and ACT UP/San Francisco, who died of AIDS complications this past June.

The flyer also expressed white activists' inspiration from the work of Bartolo Hernandez de Jesus, a gay leader of the U.S.-based Puerto Rican Movement for National Liberation (or MLN in Spanish), who played a key role in the organization's 1987 adoption of a strong position against homophobia, and who died of AIDS complications in 1989. The first ever lesbian/gay contingent in a "free Puerto Rico" march, held in New York a month after Hernandez' death, was dedicated to him, and the mention of his name at that 1989 rally drew cheers from the mostly straight crowd.

"I'm here because it's crucial for my liberation as a lesbian to oppose all forms of racism and colonialism that support the system which also oppresses lesbians," Kate Holm of Lesbian and Gay Folks and the Free Puerto Rico Committee, commented. "I think it's very important we're here today as gay men and lesbians to show that we understand that all oppression has to be ended, that Puerto Rico has to be free before full human rights can be guaranteed in the U.S."

Carlos Ortiz, a major march organizer, is the first gay coordinator of the National Committee to Free Puerto Rican POWs and Political Prisoners, and leader of VIDA/SIDA, a Chicago alternative AIDS treatment program for Puerto Ricans. "More

and more, the gay and lesbian community is getting involved in issues that deal directly with different communities, especially with people of color," Ortiz said. "Many of the North Americans doing work around the issue of Puerto Rican political prisoners and POWs are gay and lesbian. I think that having a contingent here sent a message to a lot of people that we are here and that we really are involved in issues beyond AIDS or other lesbian and gay community issues."

The rally's emotional high note came from Rafael Cancel Miranda, one of five Nationalists who served over 25 years in prison for attacks with guns on Congress and the President's temporary residence in the 1950s. All are now widely considered Puerto Rican national heroes; they were unconditionally released by President Carter in 1979 after an international campaign much like the current one.

Cancel Miranda noted, "When I got 81 years, [the U.S. government] thought I'd never get out. But they forgot about something: all you people out there. We had the power to get our brothers and sisters out from those prisons. All we needed was determination." He urged all to unite to free the 18 current pro-independence political prisoners and POWs.

Jose Lopez, spokesperson for the Puerto Rican MLN, castigated the U.S. as "the most hypocritical power on earth. It talks about independence for the Baltic states and it denies independence to the Puerto Rican people, it denies the Native Americans the right of self-determination, it keeps Black people in a permanent state of internal colonialism...."

"Colony" says U.N.

The demand for Puerto Rico's independence stems from the U.S. invasion of the island in 1898, then a semi-sovereign Spanish colony (first seized after Columbus' 1493 landing.) Today the country remains occupied by over 11 U.S. military bases. While granted an elected "commonwealth" government with nominal power, Puerto Rico has been forced to cede ultimate decision-making to the U.S. Congress. The United Nations Decolonization Committee has repeatedly labeled the situation "colonial" and demanded that the U.S. relinquish control.

Thirteen of the 18 jailed Puerto Rican activists, most already held for over 10 years, are members of a clandestine pro-independence organization that took credit for bombing dozens of mainland government and corporate targets from 1974-1983. The activists were convicted of "seditious conspiracy" and various bomb charges; they have demanded protection as prisoners of war under the Geneva Convention (expanded in the 1970s to cover anti-colonial combatants.)

Five other Puerto Rican activists (four of whom were convicted of "robbery conspiracy" in relation to an armed action in Hartford, Conn.) have demanded recognition as political prisoners. The U.S. government has rejected both political categories, labeling all the activists "common criminals."

According to the prisoners' supporters, many of the imprisoned *independentistas*—among whom are six women—have faced extremely abusive prison conditions, including small group isolation, solitary confinement, behavior modification and sexual harassment.

The march date was chosen to mark "Columbus Day" and to highlight next year's

Continued on page 10

U.S. and European styles clash

1991 International Bisexual Conference in Amsterdam shows European tolerance and lack of identity politics; academic activist split also rages

By Liz A. Highleyman

AMSTERDAM—At the First International Bisexual Conference, October 4-5 at Holland's Vrije Universiteit, cross-cultural differences were readily apparent. The contrast between the tolerance of Amsterdam and the narrowness of the U.S. was eye-opening, and the differences in the ways European and U.S. bisexuals (and gay men and lesbians) conceptualize and organize around sexuality were thought-provoking. The conference provided the usual selection of presentations and workshops on organizational, political, and health-related topics, but for many participants, the opportunity to interact with bisexuals from different countries and to examine cultural differences was the most rewarding aspect.

A majority of the conference's 250 attendees were Dutch, with sizeable British and American representation (mostly from Boston, San Francisco and Washington D.C.). The various cities of the Netherlands are home to seven bisexual organizations. The American and British bisexual communities are also among the strongest. Members of bisexual groups from several European countries attended, as well as people who had had little luck finding or establishing bisexual groups in their areas; Reportedly 30 countries were represented.

The contrast between academics and organizers/activists was apparent in the formal presentations (which took place both mornings, while workshops took place both afternoons). Many attendees found it disconcerting to hear professional sexologists presenting as scientific fact things which contradicted many people's lived experience as bisexuals. Some presenters emphasized the biology rather than the social aspects of sexuality, and a few speakers conflated sexuality with sexual behavior and gender and bisexuality with androgyny.

Dutch researcher Gert Hekma suggested that bisexuals should look beyond the gay/lesbian identity and focus on developing their own. While many gay men and lesbians define gender as the primary component of sexuality, Hekma believes that bisexuals should acknowledge that desire is as much (or more) based on other features such as age, appearance, and activity preference.

Many U.S. bisexual activists would disagree. They claim that bisexuals share a common identity with gay men and lesbians

based on their same-sex attractions and their shared struggle against heterosexism, although the issue of where bisexuals stand in relation to gay men and lesbians is the subject of much discussion and controversy in the United States: Are bisexuals included in "gay and lesbian?" Are bisexuals a distinct but equally valuable component of the queer movement? Or would bisexuals do better to organize as a separate movement and work with gay men and lesbians as allies?

Another speaker, Iteke Weeda, a professor of emancipation from Groningen, Holland was disturbingly bi-supremacist. Weeda sees bisexuality as more highly evolved and superior to homo- or heterosexuality. She claims that in a future society in which the population is aging (resulting in a "surplus" of older women) and people need a broad extended network for economic security (given the failures of the nuclear family and the welfare state), androgynous bisexuality will be the preferred mode. In contrast, North American bisexual activists tend to believe that bisexuality is part of a continuum of valid options, and that all people should be free to love whom they choose.

Given the scarcity and inaccuracy of existing research on bisexuality (bisexuals have commonly been lumped with homosexuals in studies), participants welcomed Ron Fox's presentation. Fox, a San Francisco researcher and psychotherapist, presented the results of his recent survey of 900 self-identified bisexuals. His findings show that bisexuals are a diverse group. Thirty-five percent had previously identified as gay or lesbian, while 10 percent had identified as straight. Many of the younger respondents identified first as bisexual. Fox hypothesized that the bisexual label is more well known and the bisexual identity is more available to people coming out today.

An afternoon workshop on cross-cultural differences between countries revealed some interesting comparisons, even though most of the participants were from North American, the U.K., or Northern Europe, thus limiting the cross-cultural scope. European bisexuals, lesbians, and gay men do not see their sexuality as a political identity as much as activists in the U.S. There is comparatively more emphasis on ideological politics (for instance, whether someone is a marxist or a socialist-feminist) than on identity politics.

Continued on page 10

AIDS hysteria in Boston election

By Dawn Schmltz

BOSTON—The District 2 city council race reached its highest pitch during a debate Oct. 15, when challenger Michael Cronin charged incumbent James Kelly with disregard for health care needs of his constituents, failure to represent the diversity of the district and spreading ignorance about AIDS and gay/lesbian families. Kelly then blasted Cronin's involvement with ACT UP and Queer Nation, which he called "very militant, very radical and very extremist" organizations.

"How can you associate with those two groups, both of whom have participated in anti-Catholic demonstrations?" Kelly demanded of Cronin. Replying that he was proud to be associated with ACT UP, Cronin, who is openly gay, said, "There are people all over the U.S. who are alive now because of the work ACT UP has done."

In a statement issued after the debate was taped, Cronin criticized Kelly for denouncing ACT UP's tactics, given Kelly's high-profile role in anti-busing demonstrations in the 1970s. "[F]rom 1976 to 1980 I was teaching inside South Boston High School while he was leading anti-busing demonstrations outside," Cronin stated. "I do not equate throwing condoms in a demonstration with the throwing of rocks at children inside a school bus." Kelly claims the anti-busing demonstrations were "orderly, by and large."

Cronin, a health-care activist, accused Kelly of "keeping people apart from each other" by spreading disinformation and hysteria about AIDS. He cited a 1987 column authored by Kelly concerning the testing of teachers for HIV. In the article, Kelly wrote, "It is possible to transmit the [HIV] virus through the air, such as through coughing or sneezing It may also be transmitted through insects and bed bugs." The article

continues, "Although it can be transmitted through sexual contact, the virus is not easily transmitted by heterosexual sex: It is largely a disease affecting and infecting the homosexual population — but spreading."

Kelly denied he had said HIV was transmittable through coughing or sneezing, despite the article, published in the *South Boston Tribune*. He later told *GCN* that he does not stand by the information in the article, which, he said, was taken from information in *Newsweek* magazine. Kelly added, however, "I don't have any problem with testing doctors, dentists or patients.... The only way it would work is if it was mandatory." Kelly further stated that he opposes condom distribution in schools and clean needle exchange programs to prevent HIV transmission, measures that Cronin endorses.

Health care

The issue of access to health care for all District 2 residents, including those with AIDS, is a major focus of Cronin's campaign. "We live in a city that is supposed to be the mecca of health care for the entire world, yet there are folks in our district who don't get health care because they don't have insurance," Cronin stated. District 2 has the highest incidence of cervical cancer of any area in the country and is home to more PWAs than any other area of the state, according to Cronin. The district is composed of South Boston, the South End, Chinatown and part of Dorchester.

"There's really so much a creative city councilor can do," to increase access to health care among constituents and throughout the city, Cronin told *GCN*. Not only is a city councilor in a position to influence state policy makers, but he or she can also work toward holding local health care providers to their responsibility to provide services to

Continued on page 10

GCN JOBS

Business Manager

Responsible for financial management using computerized accounting system, for accounts payable and receivable, staff payroll and generating regular financial reports. Perform general office management tasks. Develop and maintain bookstore sales and bookstore accounts. Negotiate and maintain longterm exchange advertisement contracts. Act as one of two staff liaisons to the Board of Directors. This position will work closely with the development coordinator on long-range financial planning and developing annual budgets.

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Please send resume and cover letter to: GCN Job Search Committee, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

explanation of the irony that the Cambridge Lavender Alliance, an organization of progressive gays, lesbians and bisexuals, did not endorse an openly lesbian candidate—Elaine Noble. Thorough research and spirited discussion led an overwhelming majority of Lavender Alliance members to conclude that Ms. Noble does not represent a progressive choice for Cambridge. Her citations of Howie Carr as an arbiter of city government are just a part of her distressing display of poor judgment. Her accolades in the *Boston Globe* for Dapper O'Neill, the icon of Boston bigotry, were inexplicable. So too was her expression to Cambridge Civic Association boardmembers that discussions of religious displays and condoms by city leaders were silly. Her claim to have reached out to Cambridge gay and lesbian groups at the outset of her candidacy is false. Her plan for gutting the current city charter is hasty and ill-conceived, coming as it does from an admitted newcomer to Cambridge public affairs. And last, her puzzling charge that the Lavender Alliance (which is open to all gay/lesbian/bisexual people and their supporters in Cambridge) is "morally bereft" (*Cambridge Chronicle*, 10/17) seems to proceed from her anger at not being endorsed; she surely did not level those charges at the meeting she had previously attended nor while she sought our endorsement.

We invite your readers to consult the October 18 *Boston Phoenix* to get a taste of the "morally bereft" candidate herself as she levels desperate McCarthyite charges of child molestation at a progressive and idealistic gay, lesbian and bisexual group that dared to reject her flimsy yet dangerous candidacy.

Indeed, it is no more ironic that the Lavender Alliance did not endorse Elaine Noble than it is surprising that progressive people of color rejected Clarence Thomas. Principles and record are more important than sexuality or race for some citizens trying to do the right thing.

Sincerely,
Donna Turley
Sue Hyde
Brian Mooney
Arthur Lipkin
Cambridge, Mass.

Confronting gender-phobia

Dear GCN:

I would like to respond to Flowing's letter regarding "Safe, wimmin-only space" in the Sept. 29-Oct. 5, 1991 issue.

Flowing states that "The essential element, that a male-to-female transsexual was asked to leave the festival land, was ignored."

I believe the fundamental issue is that the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival has a *covert* policy, and the festival producers are negligent for not publicly stating their exclusion policy against transsexuals. There is no excuse for not having a public policy. Given the fact that the festival producers have an explicit policy with regard to participation by men and boys, it is unconscionable for them to have a covert policy for transsexuals.

Women at risk from their covert policy; i.e., women who are singled out for questioning about how they acquired womanhood, and who resist this invasion of privacy, have a right to know that the festival is not a safe space for them *before* they plan their vacation and travel 1000 miles. Also, all women who attend the festival have a right to know the politics they are supporting when they attend the Michigan festival.

I have the deepest regard for women's space. I would never attend a festival or event that has a public "womyn-born-womyn only" policy. I went to Michigan because I believed I was welcome. I knew there were a minority of ultra-PC women who would object to my presence, but I did not realize that their prejudicial attitudes were supported by the festival producers. Beyond \$700+ in expenses, I endured emotional trauma and I ended up using my vacation time to heal from the experience.

Flowing's Native American gene analogy to transsexualism has an interesting twist because some Native tribes have rituals and rites of passage for members who wish to assume the role of the opposite sex. These Native Americans honor the Berdache as healers and shamans. Trashing and marginalizing trans-generated folks seems to be primarily a patriarchal, dominant culture behavior. The supporters of the covert policy seem to agree with the patriarchal notions that "biology is destiny" and that the anatomy one is born with is an absolute and immutable determinant of one's gender identity.

ity. If Flowing is attempting to legitimize her gender politics by associating them with Native American culture, then she fails in a very fundamental way.

It's ironic that the festival personnel, in their attempt to deny my womanhood, have actually served to strengthen it. As a result of their actions I reached out to my community and received nurturing support, to such an extent that I felt empowered to embrace my transsexualism and come out publicly. Their assault on my womanhood has nudged me out of the closet and now I feel compelled to take a more public and active role in confronting genderphobia.

Nancy Jean Burkholder
Weare, N.H.

Sacrificial human beings

Dear GCN:

I am writing in response to Flowing's letter on "Safe Wimmin-Only Space" published in the Sept. 29-Oct. 5, 1991 issue.

Yes Flowing, you have a right to the kind of space you want. If that is also what the majority of women at the Michigan Women's Music Festival want, which I doubt, the producers must state a clear policy about excluding transsexuals. This will give you your "transsexual-free" space, while allowing the rest of us to seek out space that is not based on discrimination and prejudice in which to celebrate our womanhood.

I'd suggest "No Transsexuals Allowed," since that's the only policy that's not open to interpretation. You see, you are right about one thing: surgery and estrogen do not a woman make. Transsexualism goes much deeper than that, it involves the heart and soul. In fact, research shows that the condition is probably pre-natal. In other words, transsexuals are as much "women-born-women" as you are! They are not "men masquerading as women," but are simply women who were born with a birth defect.

Furthermore, your suggestion that "the patriarchy" is forcing this on you is patently ridiculous. The driving force behind this is a small group of oppressed human beings who would like their humanity acknowledged.

Finally, what I find really disturbing in your letter is the attitude of hatred and prejudice that hides in every line. You are far too willing to sacrifice human beings to your opinions. Your letter reads like the hateful, homophobic ravings we must often live with in straight space, and that is truly sad.

Joanne Younge
Nashua, N.H.

No rationalizations

Dear GCN:

I would like to respond to the letter written by Flowing which was printed in the Sept. 29-Oct. 5, 1991 issue.

It appears that Flowing ignored the essential element of the issue, which is that the producers of the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival expelled someone from the festival based on a *covert* policy.

Given Flowing's obvious disgust/disdain for "the patriarchy" and patriarchal tactics, I find it rather contradictory that she would support the use of covert policies and tactics at the festival. Covert activities have their roots in "the patriarchy."

I disagree with Flowing's statement that Nancy's removal from the land was done with respect and dignity. The simple fact that the producers have this covert policy and that the producers refused to speak with her directly precluded any possibility that this incident would have any shred of respect and dignity for the persons involved.

As for the "benevolent" gesture of the producers' arranging for accommodations at a motel, I'd be happy to describe for the readership my experience of that hotel, lest the producers be viewed as bad guys. Hell, they probably dropped a good 20 or 30 buck on this room.

I have inserted this from a longer version of an article I wrote about my experience at the 1991 Michigan Womyn's Music Festival....

We drove to a motel that had been selected and paid for by the festival producers.

The hotel was a hell-hole. It was constructed of cinder-block walls with a cement slab floor. A dark, dirty and damp carpet covered the concrete. The air in the room was damp and smelled of mildew. The plumbing at the sink leaked and rusty water trickled into the basin of the sink. I yanked back the bed covers hoping and praying that I would not find bed bugs. My skin crawled, and yet I could do nothing else but succumb to my own mental and physical exhaustion. I had now been awake for 42 hours, had driven 1050 miles and had not eaten a meal

Gay Community News

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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Gay Community News is published weekly (except for the last week of April, August and December), by the Bromfield Street Educational Foundation, Inc., a non-profit, tax-exempt corporation. Our office is located at 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA 02116. (617) 426-4469, FAX: (617) 426-2723, TTY/TDD: (617) 426-0332 Second-class postage paid at Boston, Mass. Annual subscription rate for individuals is \$39. Institutional rate: \$55. ISSN: [0147-0728].

Member Gay and Lesbian Press Association, New England Press Association, Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, COSMEP. GCN is included in the Alternative Press Index, published quarterly by the Alternative Press Center, Inc., Box 33109, Baltimore, MD 21218. Volumes 1-15 of GCN are available on microfilm for \$40/volume, \$550/complete set. Write GCN/Microfilm for more information.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: Gay Community News, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116.

Ai beg to differ

Dear GCN:

Several months ago ai wrote a Speaking Out concerning the oppression of Romani people. In that essay ai confronted the Radical Faeries' use of Gypsy in the Emma Goldman Gypsy Players, as racist.

The Sept. 15-21 issue of GCN contained an article on Emma Goldman Gypsy Players in which a tiny paragraph at the end of the article addressed the charge of racism. Ai wish ai could say *dealt* with the charge, but sadly, that is not the case. Each quote in that paragraph was more offensive than the one before; terrifying when spoken by self-proclaimed "anti-racists!"

Ai cannot adequately address the issues involved via a letter to the editor, nor is that my intention. But ai do want to say: it is not true that use of the descriptive noun gypsy to mean wanderer has nothing to do with Romani people. The origin of the meaning of the word lies in the oppression of my people. *It is racist!* We were not allowed to stop in any place; not permitted to settle anywhere. When we did stop we were hunted, enslaved and burned. Today in many parts of the world, Romani people are confined to reservations or camps should they want to cease wandering. Hitler used the fact of Romani nomadic lifestyle as proof of anti-social behavior and justification for extermination. And the Emma Goldman Players say the noun gypsy has nothing to do with the Romani people. If you are anti-racist ai suggest you use the word wanderer in your name.

Secondly, ai can't ignore the statement, "Racism involves deliberate and purposeful attitudes and actions." Oh ai beg to differ. Racism is often perpetuated by and in ignorance. Racist attitudes and behaviors become commonplace in society. This is a fundamental aspect of institutionalized racism. Ai suspect this is the core of our disagreement over the use of Gypsy in your name. It is up to each person to analyze the realities behind even so-called accepted words behaviors and norms. So much more needs to be said on this subject. Ai'm asking readers to engage in a dialogue on racism.

Please write your views. Ai am especially interest in others' responses to the quote "Racism involves deliberate and purposeful attitudes and actions."

J.M. Ahern
Seattle, Wash.

Principles are more important

Dear GCN:

We feel that the community is owed some

since 6 a.m. on Monday morning. I had not the will or the energy to search for a different hotel to stay in.

I would also like to note at this time that I have already sent two letters to the producers and have not received any response from them. Does refusal to communicate convey respect and dignity towards another individual? I think not.

Flowing expresses the sentiment that: Lesbian-identified wimmin-only space is precious and increasingly rare. However, the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival bills itself as a gathering of *all* women where we can value our diversity.

It is unfortunate that Flowing cannot see the injustice that was perpetrated by the producers because of their covert policy. Nancy made no rationalizations in attending the 1990 and 1991 festivals. The only rationalizations I see and hear are being expressed by people who can't see the dishonesty and injustice of hatred and bigotry being supported by secret rules and the intolerance of diversity.

Laura Ervin
Stow, Mass.

Sincerely troubled

Dear GCN:

I would like to respond to the letter written by Flowing, printed in the Sept. 29-Oct. 5, 1991 issue of GCN.

I am a "womyn born womyn," identified as female at birth, raised as female and possessed of a potentially fertile female reproductive system. Yet I have on several occasions been perceived as a male-to-female transsexual. If I had been at the Michigan Women's Music Festival and been approached by festival security as Nancy was, I would have had exactly the same resources she had to prove her gender: my legal identification and my genitals. Would the festival security personnel have evicted me "with respect and dignity" in order to restore the "feeling of safety" to women who perceived me as being a "surgically altered man?" Would they evict me from the festival based not on my actions but rather on my appearance, my voice, my personal style? Such a judgmental, rules-based action seems to come directly from the hierarchical social model we as feminists are trying to live without.

Flowing asks, "Why is it that because patriarchal medicine has made it possible to surgically remove a penis and use estrogen that some of us so readily accept claims of surgically-altered men masquerading as wimmin?" There are a number of women in my life: some (like me, or my post-menopausal mother) take estrogen, most don't; some have penises, most don't. I don't accept the claim (which I have never heard from a transsexual) that removal of a penis makes a man into a woman, but I can certainly understand why a woman with a penis might seek assistance from the medical establishment, patriarchal or not, to re-shape her genitals.

Flowing says, speaking about the Michigan Women's Music Festival in particular and woman-only space in general, "....there are women committed to....maintaining a safe wimmin-only environment...." Although I support others' rights to have a women-born-as-women-only space if they so desire (and if they clearly label it as such), I feel compelled to point out that for me and many others, such a space is not and cannot be safe space. Too many of us wonder who will be excluded next from such "safe" space: lesbian-identified bisexual women, women who have seriously considered female-to-male reassignment, butch dykes who are sometimes mistaken for men....?

Sincerely Troubled,
Linda Huxtable
Shawnee Mission, Kans.

On volunteers

Dear GCN:

In this crass civilization there is an overwhelming need for volunteer orientated individuals who operate from inner drives other than money. I suspect there is a common thread that runs through individuals who volunteer their time and efforts to making others lives a bit brighter. These individuals include volunteers who unconditionally love the terminally ill, the homeless, the abused, the downtrodden, and, in general, those humans too often ignored by mainstream "professionals" who operate primarily from a financial profit motive. "Non-financial incentives for volunteers of not-for-profit organizations" is the topic of research I am conducting in cooperation with a Midwestern university. I shall wholeheartedly appreciate the

Truth in textbooks

By Owen Shows

Despite the fury of conservatives, the multicultural movement in education has spread from academia into the schoolroom. In the face of mounting pressure from minorities across the country, textbook publishers are scrambling to accentuate the multicultural aspects of their products. Although many publishers are making a genuine attempt to represent the truly complex nature of society and history, there is still one minority that is unacknowledged in the new picture of multicultural diversity. Unlike other minority groups that have made great strides in defining how they are to be represented in textbooks, members of the gay community are still waiting for textbooks to acknowledge our existence.

Our continued invisibility in textbooks is not surprising; critics argue that, unlike other minorities, we have no ethnic or cultural identity. In fact, we are the only cross-ethnic and cross-cultural minority, with little in common apart from our sexual orientation. Why then should gay identity be mentioned in textbooks at all?

The most compelling argument for gay visibility in textbooks is humanitarian, and has to do with the adolescent death rate. Deprived of role models, and assailed by mounting homophobic abuse in our schools, gay and lesbian youth are taking their lives in record numbers. Recent studies have confirmed that 30-40 percent of all teen suicides are committed by gay youth—an outrageously disproportionate figure if it is true that gay people make up only 10 percent of the population.

The real reason for the lack of gay visibility in textbooks is, of course, political. Only 21 years have passed since the Gay Rights movement was born during the Stonewall

riot in New York City (when gay men and lesbians first fought back against police harassment). Although we have made considerable legal progress since then, the movement still lags far behind on the road travelled by the civil rights movement in the 1950s and '60s. We have yet to achieve one of the major victories of those years—the right to be represented in textbooks. In fact, the level of information about lesbians and gay men in the 1990s is reminiscent of the level of information about non-white culture that preceded the first phase of multiculturalism (when textbooks admitted that other races existed). It was not long ago that the history of Black achievements had no place in the school curriculum, just as today gay identity remains unmentionable in the teaching of history.

Any suggestion of "outing" historical figures invariably meets with passionate resistance from conservatives. However, as hate crimes proliferate nationally, it may become increasingly difficult for textbook publishers *not* to deal with homophobia. In refusing to break silence about homophobic persecutions in the past, publishers will be seen as lending tacit support to bigotry. It is unconscionable that in social studies texts, for instance, writers are not allowed to mention the tens of thousands of gay prisoners who died in the Nazi concentration camps, or the fact that of all minorities, homosexuals remained imprisoned after the Allies' "liberation" of these camps. This is censorship at its most obscene. We have not come so very far from the days when all homosexual references and episodes in Latin and Greek texts were left untranslated in the English editions.

As gay studies broaden our historical perspective, we have begun to realize that there is no weapon stronger than scholarship.

Black and feminist scholars have long understood that the past is a force for liberation, in that it exposes a history of oppression and offers examples of achievements made against the odds. In the case of gay studies, history also reveals the extent to which Western society once, in the classical period, accepted and sanctioned homosexual relationships.

It is sad that a call for truth in textbooks may seem so radical a concept. Will society ever stop believing in Napoleon's dictum that "History is lies generally agreed upon."? Even if textbook publishers did not have a moral obligation to tell the truth, or to provide gay and lesbian youth with positive role models, their hand may one day be forced by a new phenomenon: Whether by previous heterosexual marriage, artificial insemination or adoption, the number of gay and lesbian families with children is increasing. Will the parents of these children be content with the current suppression of information or will they call for the positive representation of gay life and the truth about gay history?

The gay community should now begin to exert pressure on textbook publishers to break the silence obscuring our existence. Even if most members of the gay community are childless, we must pressure publishers for the sake of all those gay and lesbian children who are now being subject to persecution and homophobia in the schools—the children who, if not genetically, are spiritually "ours."

If we can force publishers to live up to their new multicultural ideal, and provide textbooks that reflect the truth about society and history, perhaps next time the concentration camps are liberated, lesbians and gay men won't be the last to leave.

assistance of GCN readers who choose to be part of the sample population surveyed for this project. If you are an active volunteer or employee in a not-for-profit setting and wish to participate in the study, please request a questionnaire from the address below.

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MARILYN HUMPHRIES

Invisibility

Continued from page 1

racial justice, political difference and respect for the immense complexity of all our lives in a manner that is critical, respectful and strategically effective.

We saw what happens when a Black woman asks those who "represent the American people" for serious consideration of a very real experience of oppression. We saw the result for her and the country. What about those of us who weave into the fabric of identity our sexual orientation, identifying as gay or lesbian or bisexual? Dare we expect to engage in a complex dialogue which allows us to stand as whole human beings? Or is it more realistic to expect a surgical strike at our "flaw"—our womanhood or blackness or love of women?

I didn't expect much from those 14 white men who were questioning Anita Hill and Clarence Thomas. I did expect more from African Americans. I was in Akron, Ohio for much of the hearing, visiting my family. I got a sense of the opinion of my "home" community. What I found in that community of color was not my father's opinion about Anita Hill—that she was probably telling the truth—rather what I found was a majority opinion which felt like we needed to circle around Clarence. That Anita Hill was a castrating bitch. That if we didn't stand behind Clarence we would get someone worse.

My father claimed there is no one worse. I think there is no worse political and social situation for African Americans than to sit and say he's a Black man, we should defend him; she's a castrating bitch and not one of us.

We—communities of color, working-class people, progressive political activists—seem to not have the ability at critical political moments to publicly rise above Reagan/Bush newspeak and guide the political dialogue ourselves. We cannot say effectively "This man is lying." Do we want this man who doesn't have the courage to stand behind his recent opinions, who when faced with a credible allegation made reluctantly, reverts to a defense of what he claims he didn't need—an identification as an oppressed black man? This frightens me. We don't have the ability to have public dialogue about the intersections of our lives.

No one seems to be able to galvanize Black people to have this dialogue. We need to stop doing to each other what was done to Anita Hill. We can't go on letting owning-class people who control our government represent our differences as caricatures. Black people must begin to address issues of sexual harassment and sexual abuse in constructive, responsible and healing ways. We have to address the rampant misogyny in Black political thinking. We have to understand, as Audre Lorde has pointed out, that it is our differences which provide the resources for our political work, for addressing the massive disinformation which is the hallmark of electoral politics in the United States today. I refuse to walk with the fear that my blackness, my womanhood, my lesbian identity make me a target and a caricature. The challenge for those of us who claim the fullness of our lives, and love our lives is to use our differences as a resource for reversing this country's slide into intolerance and despair. □

Rebecca Johnson lives in Jamaica Plain and is the director of the Women's Economic Development Project for Women for Economic Justice.

Best

Continued from page 1

pervert."

Thus they not only "proved" Hill was a liar, but they also portrayed themselves as so sensitive to the charges of sexual harassment that they could not even conceive of such a

crime (let alone commit it). Hill, then, couldn't be a victim of sexual harassment because the harassment she recounted couldn't have happened.

The implication that Hill was lying eventually gave way to the blatant assertion that she was fantasizing. Hatch, Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa) and others began changing their theory when Hill's corroborating witnesses appeared and clinched it when Hill passed a lie detector test. They asserted that the harassment she recounted was so awful she must have imagined it. Left unchallenged, of course, was the flaw in this theory: why would anyone fantasize about such painful experiences?

Another tactic came through in what members of the committee successfully had the country believing was one of the most serious "inconsistencies" in Hill's story: the fact that Hill didn't make a harassment claim at the time of the harassment. Thomas' backers discredited her by pointing to the fact that although Hill was working at the time for the very agency charged with enforcement of such sexual harassment laws, Hill never made a claim.

Of course, the real question is, why would Hill make a claim? How could she bring a case against the head of the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission and expect to win, especially since the federal courts had yet to establish the precedent of a "hostile work environment" as a method of prosecuting such cases?

In reality, a minuscule fraction of women subjected to sexual harassment make such claims. So Hill's testimony did not, as the members of the committee had the country convinced, reflect aberrant behavior on the part of a sexual harassment victim. To the contrary. Hill, in internalizing the problem and only mentioning it to some close friends, had acted in accordance with theories of how women respond to sexual harassment in the majority of cases.

The idea that Hill was overly ambitious (read: excessively independent, doesn't need a man) was turned against her as well. The theory that her testimony was an attempt to ruin Thomas' career—because she resented him for not giving her the most important assignments at the EEOC—was initiated by Thomas himself, expanded upon by his supporting witnesses, and embraced by his backers on the committee. Hill was accused of "rampant careerism" in the media, but no one attempted to show how testifying could possibly enhance her chances for success as a law professor or civil rights lawyer.

It is, in fact, clear that to some extent Hill is an ambitious woman. Yet this should have supported her case, because nothing could have ruined her career so quickly ten years ago than to have brought sexual harassment charges against a prominent Reagan appointee. And, as she implied in her testimony, she knew it at the time.

Given the deplorable tactics employed to discredit Anita Hill—and all victims of sexual harassment—were women across the country making a mistake when they jammed the Senate switchboards in outrage, demanding Hill be heard? Were the women members of the House of Representatives wrong when they stormed into the Senate and demanded Hill's statement be taken seriously?

No, because although leaders of feminist organizations are beginning to doubt their judgment in light of the final outcome, including the effects it had on Hill personally, blaming themselves for the fiasco is far from productive. The terribly painful hearings were not the result of angry feminists any more than they were the result of a leak. The real culprit, clearly, is one man's use of power to humiliate and embarrass a woman, and society's revictimization of women as played out so clearly in the Senate hearing room. □

Uncle Thomas

Continued from page 1

the race well and conducted themselves with dignity. What a shock I got when I asked what they thought about attorneys Wells and Carr (Black witnesses for Hill) and learned that these friends and family members had not even seen the Hill supporters.

The liberal Democrats had no clue as to what would speak to Black people. Only Sen. Edward Kennedy could have provided a real alternative to the picture created by the rightwing, but he was silenced by his own sexist contradictions. Nonetheless I still wondered why there were no moves to make Strom Thurmond and Orrin Hatch pay for their racist contradictions.

Democrats didn't have to bring up Thurmond's old Dixiecrat history; they merely needed to threaten revealing Hatch's position on the last civil rights bills. They could have exposed the Republican's close alliance with Jesse Helms, who mobilized a vicious, racist campaign to keep a Black man, Harvey Gantt out of the Senate. It was painfully clear that liberal Democrats and civil rights organizations could not deliver anything of substance to African-Americans.

I want to focus my attention on nationalists, however, because they play such a prominent role in defining race issues. After a decade of Reagan-Bush, alternative voices have been neutralized and even demonized. Ironically, with the support of George Bush and his gang of Willie Horton inventors, Thomas has participated in the final(?) silencing of the traditional civil rights leadership. And he ultimately won the day by mobilizing African-American nationalist sentiment across class and gender divisions.

Unlike Thomas, many of the most political nationalists try to distance themselves from conservative whites who advocate self-help solutions to large-scale problems, but the unfortunate cross-over between the Black nationalist and conservative white positions was painfully clear in the very person of Clarence Thomas. This cross-over gets obscured because nationalists limit our understanding of the tensions between individual achievement and uplift of the race. They could not explain, for example, how Thomas could bring powerful African-Americans into the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission—given his power concerns, it was not coincidental that most of these were women—but also act to restrain any group-based solutions to systematic racism and sexism. For all the faults that nationalists are able to expose in the civil

rights lobby, at least the lobby understands the need for group-based affirmative action against continuing and pervasive racism.

White conservatives are all too willing to have us ignore these tensions. The coalition between white conservatives and black people who are led by bourgeois nationalists has a long and distinguished history. Thomas supporter, Lincoln University President Niara Sudakarsa, speaks approvingly of the way that Thomas follows in the footsteps of Booker T. Washington. Thomas is filling Booker T.'s footsteps all too well.

Like Booker T., Thomas advocates capitalist solutions to an economically disenfranchised people. In the late 19th century, African-Americans were told to learn trades such as shoemaking that would prepare them for dying commercial ventures when industrial capitalism was on the rise. (Marcus Garvey wanted to start a small shipping line as the shipping industry contracted into a few, very large and monopolistic companies.) Today we are told to found small businesses while a few multinational corporations spread their tentacles around the world. We are told that if we have our own toothpaste factory, the unemployed will get jobs and the whole community will be strengthened. But how our businesses will compete in the post-industrial age remains a mystery.

Thomas also fills Booker T.'s footsteps when he acts as the arbiter deciding which African-Americans should get the few crumbs doled out by a conservative administration. When I think about the way that Booker T. undermined the work of Ida B. Wells because she was too radical and he could not control her, I see Thomas' mentor.

Nationalist ideology not only limits our understanding of individualism, but also depends on our unwillingness to confront the tensions between personal accomplishments and racial uplift. This ideology rests on the useless saw from the 1960s that divided blacks into the integrationists and the separatists. The integrationists were all middle-class Uncle Toms while the separatists, with Nat Turner hidden somewhere in their blood, were men of the people. This formulation hides the complexities of bourgeois nationalists who need mass mobilization for individual advancement.

It also provides no way to move in integrated society. If all radicals must be like Nat Turners, we have no language for describing what a "race person" inside of a mainstream society would look like. Nationalists also have no clear standard by which to judge whether someone is working in our interests.

Continued on page 11

WHAT'S IN STORE FOR THE NEW COURT

By Jacob Smith Yang

WASHINGTON—As the dust settles from the highly charged Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings, gay rights activists are anxiously watching as the Supreme Court examines issues that will impact the gay and lesbian community during its 1991 term. These include:

Sex discrimination

Arguments before the High Court are expected in December in *Franklin v. Gwinnett County School District*, the case of a female high school student who was sexually assaulted by a high school instructor. The plaintiff has charged that under Title IX of the Educational Amendment of 1972, which prohibits sex discrimination, the school district violated her civil rights by failing to protect her. At issue is whether or not she is entitled to sue for damages under Title IX; two federal appeals courts have previously ruled differently on the issue.

Several organizations, in conjunction with the ACLU and the National Women's Law Center, have filed an amicus brief arguing that the woman does have the right to sue for damages. Betsy Hildebrandt, communications director for the National Women's Law Center, points out that victims of race discrimination are allowed to sue under current federal laws. "Women should not receive second class remedies to discrimination," Hildebrandt told GCN.

Due process/Entrapment

Justices are also expected to hear arguments in *Jacobsen v. United States* in December, the case of a bisexual farmer in Nebraska who is challenging an undercover government sting operation that led to his arrest and conviction on charges of receiving child pornography (See GCN, Vol. 18, No. 42).

U.S. Postal inspectors targeted Jacobsen for the operation after they found an order for two nudist magazines in his name on a confiscated booksellers list. After 29 months, they finally induced Jacobsen to purchase a magazine depicting child pornography through the mail.

An amicus brief by the ACLU and the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers argues that due process prohibits the use of undercover sting operations without "reasonable suspicion" that the targeted individual would engage in illegal activity. The legal organizations also argue that activity protected by the First Amendment (ordering nudist magazines) may not constitute reasonable suspicion in launching such operations.

Clinic Blockades

In *Bray v. Alexandria Women's Health Clinic* the court will decide whether a statute adopted in the wake of the Civil War can be used to prevent anti-abortion protesters from blockading a woman's health clinic and preventing them from entering. The ACLU and other organizations have filed an amicus brief urging the court to apply the federal law under these circumstances. The ACLU argues that women are a protected class under the statute and that clinic blockades also violate a woman's constitutional right to travel across state lines to seek an abortion. They also argue that failure to enforce the statute violates a woman's right to the equal enjoyment and benefit of Virginia laws that prohibit unlawful use of force and criminal trespass.

While no case challenging *Roe v. Wade*, which establishes a woman's right to abortion, will be heard by the High Court this term, five such cases are pending in the federal courts—from Pennsylvania, Missouri, Guam, Utah and Louisiana. On Oct. 21, a Federal appeals court upheld Pennsylvania's strict abortion law, setting the stage for an appeal to the Supreme Court. The decision in such a case could result in the court striking down *Roe v. Wade*. □

WEIRD SCIENCE

PART TWO

IN THE SECOND OF A TWO-PART INTERVIEW, JENNIFER TERRY DISCUSSES THE POLITICAL AND CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS OF LOOKING FOR HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE BODY

BY KATHRYN E. DIAZ

Jennifer Terry is a historian of sexuality. She is co-editor of the forthcoming *Deviant Bodies: Scientific Constructions of Pathologized Subjects*. She is currently a post-doctoral fellow at Brown University.

In part one of this interview (*GCN*, Oct. 20-26), Terry discussed her views of Simon LeVay's widely publicized study of the brains of gay men and his assertion that one nucleus in the hypothalamus region correlated to sexual orientation. Among other issues, Terry discussed the history of scientific investigation in the area of human sexuality.

KED: Historically science has not been nice to people of color and women, but recently it has also not been nice to anyone with AIDS, including white gay men. I don't mean to suggest that science has ever been nice to gay men, but it has been nice to white straight men of means. I guess what I'm trying to ask is if there is a class issue here—are race, sex and class issues raised in the various responses to the study?

JT: I think all three. One of the aspects of struggle among AIDS activists has been to what extent we can trust doctors and scientists. Now, there are many gay doctors and scientists, some of these individuals have made a real difference as to what happens in terms of treatment and care of HIV-infected gay people—I'm thinking specifically of groups like Physicians for Human Rights.

But it is an uphill battle to get certain policies and protocols changed in order not only to effectively offer humane treatment but to have HIV disease understood as something other than a plague of the underclasses. What is now being called the AIDS industry within medicine and science reflects patterns we find in the larger society, especially when it comes to racial prejudice, in addition to homophobia.

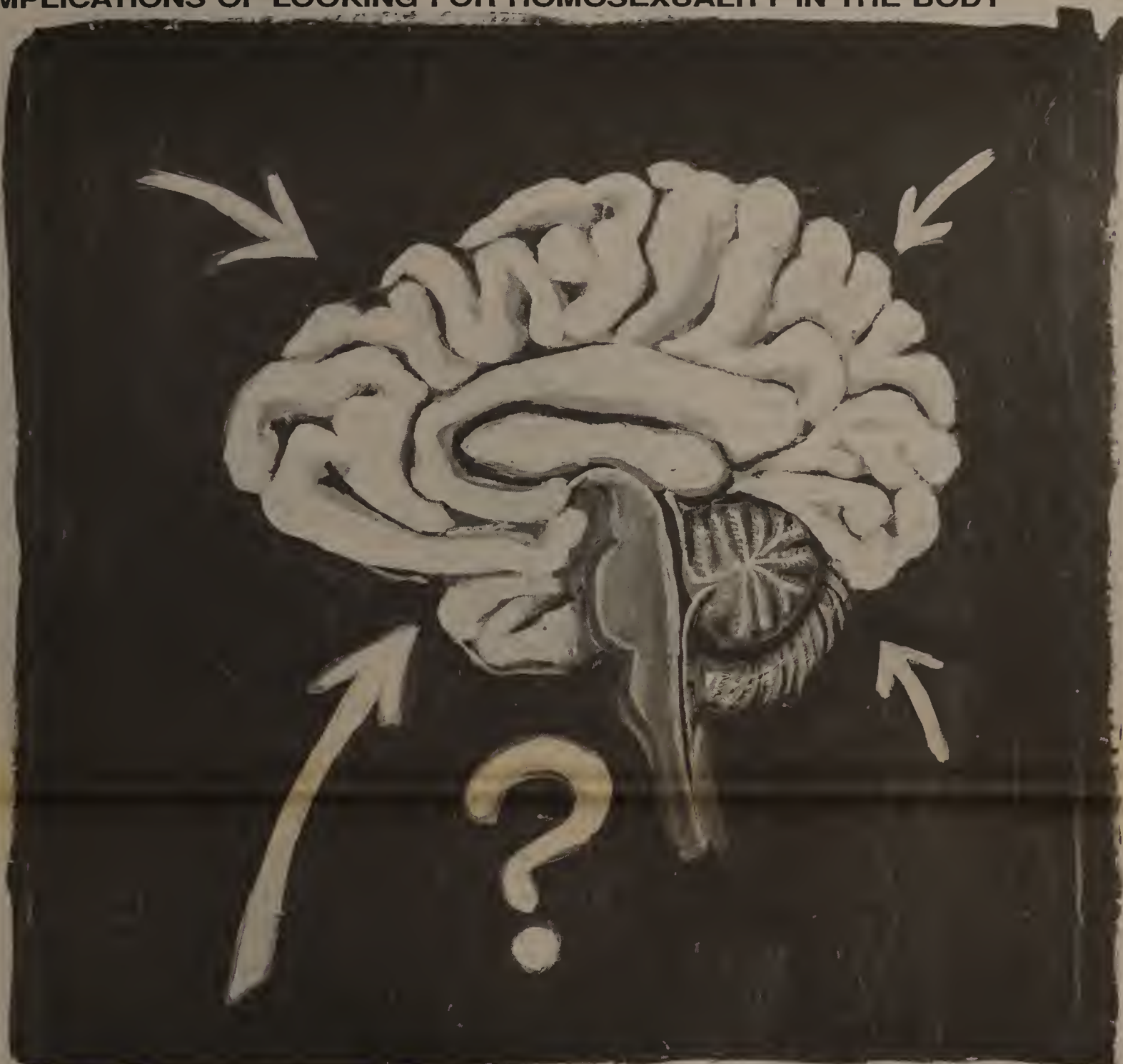
For example, certain kinds of clinical trials take priority and many of these are limited to particular kinds of people defined as "compliant" subjects, usually defined in contradistinction to those who are "troublesome," "resistant," or "unreliable." These are adjectives used to describe many poor men and women who doctors believe are not sufficiently socialized to meet their appointments and care about their health care. By contrast, affluent white men are seen as model patients because they are often knowledgeable about their treatment and appear to the doctors to be cooperative.

This is not to say that there aren't many straight doctors and health care workers who are totally freaked out and weird about treating gay men. Lesbian and gay medical people have made a difference in terms of trying to change those practices, but institutionalized science and its standard modes of operating are deeply concerned with generating two things: more money and more science. These often contradict what we would call "humanitarian need."

Many affluent and middle class gay men have come to understand relatively recently what lots of women and poor and working-class folks have known for a long time: your life and health is balanced against profit-making concerns of science, hospitals, the insurance industry and drug companies. This clearly has politicized lots of gay men. A previously unexamined faith in institutionalized science has been eroded and we find lots of gay community activism to develop alternative ways of conducting clinical trials and disseminating medicines.

I would say that gay men as gay men have never been on the friendly side of science; in other words if what brought them under the clinical gaze was their homosexuality or, today, their HIV status, then they have probably been seen as a dangerous "other" to most doctors—since they are often white men—would probably see the average white gay man as familiar and therefore not "other." Very different conditions exist for women, poor and working-class people, and many people of color when they go to the doctor. They are treated as "others."

I am interested in watching how this erosion of faith in science coming out of AIDS activism and feminist self-help activism will play out against LeVay's study. I think it is important to consider how the LeVay study is figuring into the larger issues raised by the HIV epidemic. After all, AIDS provides the context and the possibility for LeVay's study at both the con-



PEOPLE LIKE HOLLY HUGHES, MAPPLETHORPE AND DAVID WOJNAROWICZ ARE CONSIDERED VERY DANGEROUS BECAUSE THEY PROPOSE NEW AND UNRULY SEXUAL AND ARTISTIC POSSIBILITIES PRESENTED BY HOMOSEXUAL BODIES. AS FAR AS I AM CONCERNED, WE HAVE A LOT MORE EXPLORING TO DO ABOUT THE MYSTERIES OF LESBIAN AND GAY BODIES, NOT THROUGH SCIENCE BUT THROUGH CULTURAL EXPRESSION.

— JENNIFER TERRY

crete and abstract level.

First of all, his study relied logistically on autopsying the brains of people who died before aging and a large portion of his subjects died of HIV disease. But there is another way that the epidemic shapes the cultural appropriation of his rather tentative findings: there seems to be a persistent subterranean hope on the part of people who identify as heterosexual—they may be doing other kinds of practices but they identify as heterosexual—that there is some kind of essential difference between gay and straight men.

Since 1982, when the public began to hear about GRID (gay-related immune deficiency), AIDS was classified as a gay disease. And there has been a constant and willful attempt on the part of some policy-makers to get the public to go along with the belief that there is some irreducible difference between homosexuals and heterosexuals, because if you have that belief in your mind you can: one, continue to blame queers for AIDS; and two, somehow think that the virus won't jump across into the mainstream virtuous population (especially those men who identify as heterosexuals but are probably doing a whole range of sexual behaviors and other kinds of behaviors that put them at risk).

There continues to be this hope, and it is fueled by people like Jesse Helms and William Dannemeyer, that there is a difference between "those people" over there doing grotesque things and "us" over here who don't do bad things. So I would suggest that is a key element in the straight cultural imagination that welcomes LeVay's study.

KED: In terms of the cultural reception of the study, is there a difference between how people, gay or straight, react now and how they reacted to previous studies linking homosexuality to biology?

JT: This study is complicated by the fact that LeVay is introducing it as a gay person and lots of liberal straight people are saying, "Well, it can't be bad if a gay person did the research." In the past there have been studies done by peo-

ple who understood themselves to be benevolent, whether they were gay or straight, including Richard Green, the guy who did the UCLA "sissy boy" study that started in the 1950s and went through the '70s tracking the psychological development of a group of boys. Without being able to nail down the reasons, Green, who sees himself as a friend of gay people, concluded that a preponderance of "sissy boys" ended up gay.

KED: Was a tomboy study ever done?

JT: Certainly not on the same scale. Again a ripe area for research. "Calling all lesbians!" Now that would be news fit to print and it might even find its way to *Entertainment Tonight!* But interestingly, the sissy boy study, although it played into old stereotypes, was not uniformly rejected by gay people. I think this has to do with an ongoing question we find ourselves asking about why and how we are different.

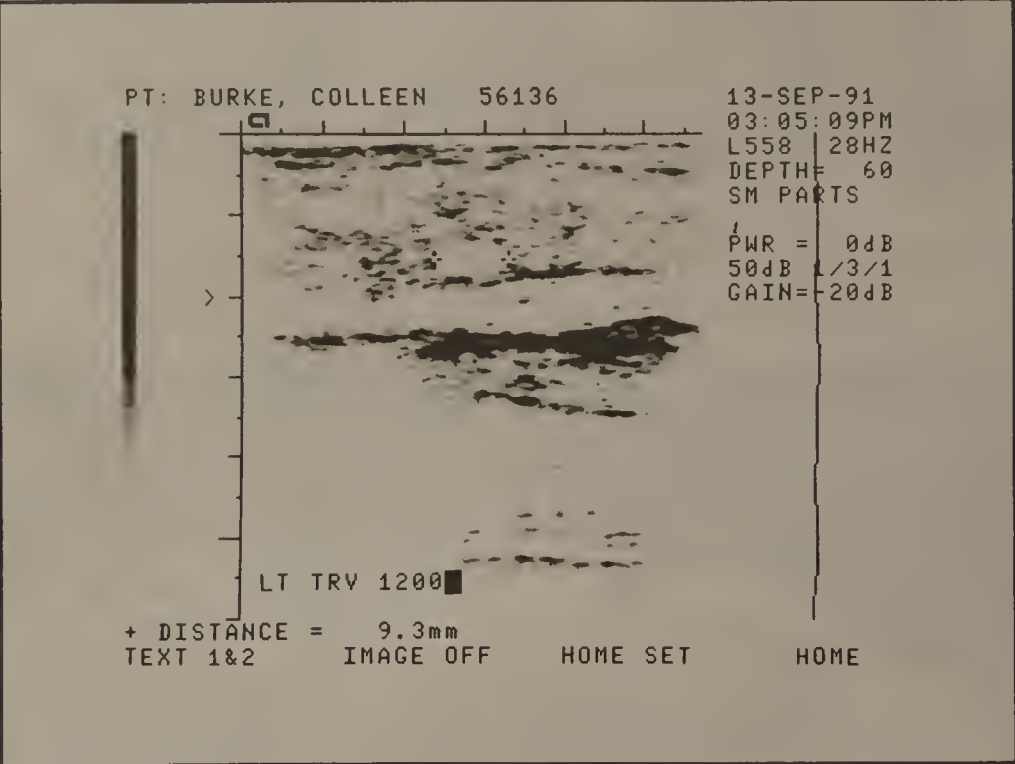
During the homophile movement, there were some conflicts over whether or not scientists ought to be brought in to study gay people, and many early lesbian and gay rights activists understood the strategic importance of having doctors and scientists report that we are okay, thus upsetting a tradition of diagnosing us as defective. In the early 1960s, Del Martin and Phyllis Lyons, two grandmothers of modern lesbianism (founders of the Daughters of Bilitis), worked to get psychiatrists and psychologists to study lesbians in order to report with authority that there wasn't anything inherently pathological about lesbians.

The battle by gay rights activists to get the American Psychiatric Association to remove homosexuality from its list of disorders was long and difficult and took getting doctors to say with authority that we were not sick. That battle was won in 1973, but we still find clinical linkages between homosexuality and disease under the new heading of "gender identity disorders." These struggles are ongoing and changes happen gradually, often with unintended consequences, both good and bad.

Continued on page 9

The politics of lancing

One woman's story



"What we have here is a solid mass, a tumor"

By Trixi

"Take off your blouse and your bra and leave the gown opening in front. The doctor will be with you in a moment."

I don't wear blouses and I don't wear a bra. I haven't since 1983 or so. Maybe it was the Ann Landers column that convinced me I didn't have to, because my pert little hand-fuls could not hold a #2 pencil placed under-neath them. My two 32As didn't need any underwire support.

My first bra was a hand-me-down, my older sister's training bra. (Such the Jan Brady memory.) I was maybe 12 or 13, Sue was 15 and already "bosomy" with a 36B. She made it a point to tell me that her right breast was a bit larger than her left and more pointy, so the training bra was stretched out on one side. She asked me if I thought that being lopsided was "deformed?" "Having both boobs bigger than tennis balls was deformed," I said in my early teen insouciance, "but not one that was missile shaped and the other round."

So I inherited her underthing. That first bra summer afternoon I absently kept trying to hike the itchy polyester contraption down to where it should be, or just plain off.

But eventually I had enough of life with-out a bra. The idea of getting erect nipples, also known as titty-hard-ons (or T.H.O.s), in public bothered me enough to actually step foot into the mall and head for The Limited. I bought a half dozen 100 percent cotton-Madonna-wanna-be-show-off-that-taut-tummy-tank-tops. Black. It was the very early '80s, after all. The tank tops were thick enough to conceal the T.H.O. phenomenon and left me feeling way '80s. I was not about to go into Victoria's Secret and pick out another unnatural fiber strap system with frilly cups. I didn't need cups or frills, just some cotton undershirts.

I was 20 years old in 1983, and getting Gender Alert. I am now 28, and some idiots still ask me for "Change, sir?" I get confused stares on the subway and then recognition after the confused person gets a load of my child-bearing hips. More than once a fellow mass transit rider has stage whispered to her friend "You can tell." while pointing to her own hips and nodding in my direction.

For a long time I felt adrift in a sea of images of femininity and what it means to look like a woman. Then all of a sudden I all but capsized over the very idea of what little gender identity I had being chopped off. I'm not talking liposuction here or sex change. I'm talking about breast tumors and mastec-tomies. There, that came out like a smooth thud.

Sometime after I turned 27, there was a six-month period during which I didn't per-form any self-exams. Shame, shame, I know. By that spring, I had noticed some soreness in my chest. It bothered me enough to men-tion it during a routine exam with a fill-in physician. My general practitioner always seemed to be away from the office when the sensitive issues came up. The fill-in, a man, told me that he didn't notice anything unusu-al and that I probably had pulled a muscle in my chest wall. After that, I just stopped look-ing for anything out of the ordinary.

The soreness came and went and I always attributed it to some sort of muscle fatigue. It wasn't until that fall that I got my "second opinion." It seemed that I couldn't hug or be hugged without wincing. It was a bit of a problem to appear "fine" when all I could

feel was intense shooting pain in my right breast. My gal pal noticed my wincing face and asked the question, "What's wrong?"

I didn't know. I was afraid to tell her, afraid to admit that I'd tried to ignore the pain and discomfort for nearly seven months. I was also afraid to admit that I was too scared to do self-examinations, or to go to the doctor, or to admit that something was terribly wrong.

But I couldn't hide any longer. Her ques-tion and concern made the whole thing more real. "Shit, this is real and now she knows something's wrong." It was real enough—and wrong enough—to call the breast clinic at the hospital and make an appointment with a specialist.

The specialist turned out to be a young, straight, white male intern who stuck a five-inch needle into my right boob several times without any anesthesia to "draw off some fluid from that cyst." Also like a smooth thud, he said, "Well, looks like it's not a cyst after all, otherwise we would have a syringe full of fluid. What we have here is a solid mass, a tumor." No, buddy. I have a tumor, and an insensitive intern. It all seemed totally backwards. I figured that since my mom had a history of fluid-filled cysts, my one huge lump had to be like a gel pack sitting in there. So, I reasoned, "Let's just aspirate it. Let's stick a huge needle into my breast, puncture the gel pack cyst and suck all of the evil fluid out." My boob would deflate accordingly. But sticking a huge needle into a solid mass was fruitless, fluidless and extremely painful.

I had two concerns at this point: one was the tumor and the other was that I was with-out health insurance. Every step seemed ter-ribly loaded for me. I went through a lot of "if only's." I owed the fill-in physician \$75 for the brilliant muscle pull diagnosis. I then tacked on \$60 for the visit to the breast clinic (or \$15 per needle jab). A week after the jab fest, I was sent for a costly sonogram (\$138.60) to confirm what I knew all along: the thing was solid and huge, but the experts needed big-bucks images to verify that it was 10cm x 7cm—or about 2"x1"—oval and solid (just like a hard-boiled egg.)

I only have so much boob to mess with and the idea of a solid mass the size of an egg confused me. How could something like that just grow in me in such a short period of time? Cancer? Worry? Would it all have been okay if I'd only done those goddamn self-exams? I've always had bumps and nod-ules in my boobs. Who knew?

I wasn't so much frightened as I was per-plexed. Kind of like I get in emergency situa-tions, reciting those first aid ditties in my head: "Face is red, raise the head; Face is pale, raise the tail." My right boob was no larger than the left.

Before long, the calm turned to anger. I had things to do and this boob thing was interfering with my life. I was just about to start a new job in a new city. I had to pack. Constant burning shooting pains in myboob kept me from packing all of my fun, good heavy stuff. And now I had a tumor and needed surgery and no insurance. And to top it off, my gal pal still couldn't hug me, let alone much else without me saying "Ow."

The boob thing got to be an annoying intruder, the guest that would not leave. It was an entire month: from facing that it was not going to go away, to my first visit to the breast clinic and then another three weeks

Continued on page 9

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Breast

Continued from page 8

until surgery. I had Boob Thing Focus and I hated it.

Obsession with boob size was never my thing. I had pert ones that never gave me any trouble, never got in the way and still managed to add a nice aesthetic curve to my otherwise bony birdlike upper torso. I never went around "checking out the babes," or used the phrases that went along with such activities either. I never mentally chopped up a woman, period. To say, "check out that ass" or whatever, was never my thought. That kind of thinking belonged to men from the Darrin Stevens era. I never thought about my own boobs being checked out by others or the potential absence of them—until I was left alone in the chilly examining room with my paper gown on (opening at the front), signing a release form giving the doctor permission to perform a "partial mastectomy" on me. All at once the idea of being lopsided became very real. Having one boob seemed worse than all 20-some-odd years of the confused Gender Alert stares and remarks.

Among all the other shit this called up, I had to wonder if I really was that obsessed with looks. I've never particularly done the "parts-versus-the-whole-of-a-person" thing in an attempt to tow a P.C. line, it's just the way I've lived my life. And since my childhood, it seems I've known never to stare at people or make personal remarks. As an adult, however, I've noticed other adults behave rudely to me in an effort to figure out my gender. On some level I feel disappointed that most grown-ups haven't seen an androgynous person sometime in their lives before setting their sights on me. And why hasn't Miss Manners effectively instructed them that, even if they haven't had a Gender Alert experience, it isn't fucking polite to point and stare? And why don't they have more important things to do in their lives than wasting their energy trying to figure out what I am?

My mind reels with these and other issues. Meanwhile, it has been exactly a year since I first called the breast clinic. I charged those visits to my Visa card and am still paying little monthly bits for the sonogram and surgery (they don't accept plastic). I am lucky that the new job in the new city came with health insurance. I even have a great physician. The follow-up surgeon/consultant, however, was not the most sensitive man I've dealt with throughout this boob ordeal. My physician has found yet another surgeon/consultant for the requisite every-three-month exams.

In the meantime, the follow-up surgeon will check out all the other little bumps I've been feeling daily since they removed the egg in last December. Inspecting myself daily may seem a bit obsessive/compulsive, but I never thought I had anything to worry about before all this. Who would've thought that for the next few years I'd have to go to the follow-up surgeon every three months for exams? I may have to face more than that in the future, such as the possibility of more surgery.

But for now, these pert little handfuls are intact—I cannot even comprehend the medical industry and personal trauma that would have followed if I had actually *had* breast cancer—and both my breasts are about the same size. The only difference is that one is squooshier than the other and a thin pink scar runs from three to nine o'clock on the bottom edge of my right nipple. Sometimes I think it looks like a little smiley face. □

The Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition is sponsoring a rally and march, "One in Nine: Stop the Epidemic," Sunday, Oct. 27. Gather at noon on Boston Common (near corner of Tremont and Park Sts.). March to Government Center. Speakers include: Susan Love, breast cancer surgeon, author and activist; Byllie Avery, founder of the National Black Women's Health Project; Mary Constanza, medical oncologist. Further info: (617) 956-4875.

Brain

Continued from page 7

KED: *What do you say to gay people who might say that, on some level, your critique of this and similar studies hurts them? Like someone who might say, "I knew from the time I was a little kid that I was different. And, in fact, that was part of my politicization." A gay man might say, "I'm a feminist because of how I was treated, or I do anti-racist work because I identify with these groups that are marginalized and discriminated against because of their immutable characteristics, sex and race. And critiques like yours might hinder our ability to do coalition work."*

JT: When I talk about the idea that we are volitional, that we as a people have some choices, I am not suggesting that we are free to choose from an infinite variety of possibilities.

And I don't believe in any simple way that we "choose" our sexual orientation.

I believe that sexual orientation is very complex and has to do with how one negotiates consciously and unconsciously their surrounding cultural and historical condition. To be rather blunt, I don't believe biology decides for us.

In talking with queer students and colleagues and friends, my position mistakenly has been taken to be, "Look, it's all a matter of choice, you decide what you want to be and that's that. It has nothing to do with your biology or your body." I'm not positing a kind of individual will that operates to direct the body's desires toward one sex or the other. I'm saying the very way we imagine homosexuality is specific to our historical and cultural context, and this context invites us to be creative and militant about expressing our marginalized sexual desires.

I think the idea of homosexuality having its origins in the body appeals to many lesbians and gay men because we *feel* what makes us different through experiencing sexual desire in our bodies. If you read coming out stories or you talk to lots of gay people, often the moment of homo self-recognition—"Oh my god, I'm queer!"—occurs at the same moment when one is overtaken by strong sexual attraction. The "Oh my god I want to jump her bones" moment.

We narrate our experiences of profound difference from heterosexuals through these amazing moments of awakened but prohibited bodily lust. In modern Western culture, which is obsessed with rationality, the body is contrasted with the mind as the place where "involuntary" responses happen that may be irrational, mysterious, powerful and inexplicable. When a lot of lesbians and gay men say they believe that their homosexuality has its origins in their bodies, I think they are drawing unconsciously on this almost primal moment of forbidden lust in the coming out process. It doesn't seem an easy translation, but I think many gay people go along with scientific studies that purport to show that homosexuality is in the body because they honestly and profoundly feel that their sexual orientation is deep down in their bodies—in their genes as well as their jeans.

I'm sympathetic to the strategic use of things like the LeVay study in order to say, "Don't fuck with me, I'm not going to change and I feel good about this." But that position does not have to rely on the body for its articulation, since we should know that draconian measures have been taken—basically torture mechanisms have been used—to find where "it" is in the body and reify it to some level of meaning that collapses the whole range of sexual possibilities. So, I'm saying yes, you may feel that your sexual orientation is deeply embedded in you—as I do myself—but to me that is a cultural, psychological and historical matter, not a biological one.

Right now in the late 20th century, lesbians and gay men are struggling with how to express and understand the complexity of what our bodies represent to ourselves and to scientists and doctors. This is the moment when LeVay's rather tentative and problematic research was so quickly gobbled up by the straight press and showcased as important new research.

At this same moment, we are watching an explosion of new gay and lesbian cultural expression through video, photography, performance art and theatrical activism that is concerned with how to represent, interpret and experience our queer bodies. And in this same moment, we find a lot of mainstream paranoia about what queer bodies are and do.

People like Holly Hughes, Mapplethorpe and David Wojnarowicz are considered very dangerous because they propose new and unruly sexual and artistic possibilities presented by homosexual bodies. As far as I am concerned, we have a lot more exploring to do about the mysteries of lesbian and gay bodies, not through science but through cultural expression.

KED: And as for building coalitions?

JT: Identity politics are certainly a strong mode of political expression. Identifying as an oppressed person can certainly make one more sensitive to other forms of oppression suffered by other people, and this can be the grounds for political mobilization. But certainly the grounds of identity are not dependent upon biological factors alone—it is how biological variation and other social factors are made into the grounds of oppression that can lead individuals to take up collective and affiliated action.

We don't need to embody a biological difference to be outraged about social injustice, nor do we necessarily need to have a particular identity or experience of oppression to struggle for radical social change and justice. If that were the case, our struggles would be small and parochial and potentially vulnerable to all the problems of separatism, like insisting on purity as a basis for membership. □

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Puerto Rico

Continued from page 3

anniversary of 500 years of resistance to colonialism and genocide in the Americas. Opposition to the U.S. government's quincentenary celebrations of the "discovery of America" was a frequent theme of rally speakers.

Bobby Castillo, representative of the International Indian Treaty Council and the American Indian Movement, expressed solidarity with the Puerto Ricans. "Your liberation is our liberation, along with the African people."

Shelley Miller, a white lesbian and former political prisoner speaking for the Free Puerto Rico Committee, told the crowd, "We understand that the existence of 18 Puerto Rican political prisoners and POWs makes it clear that neither in 1492 nor in 1991 has there ever been any choice for colonized people except struggle. For we North Americans, if we want to live in a society with peace, justice and economic rights for all people, there's no choice but struggle-[including work] for the release of the Puerto Rican political prisoners and POWs."

Dhoruba bin Wahad, a New York Black community leader and former Black Panther political prisoner who served 19 years in an alleged FBI frameup, also called for solidarity with all political prisoners and POWs. Last April, bin Wahad gave a speech at a forum of Lesbian and Gay Folks, strongly denouncing homophobia and misogyny within all communities, and calling for an alliance between the movements for lesbian/gay and Black liberation, particularly highlighting the campaign to free political prisoners.

At an October 13 meeting of Freedom Now!, a national network dedicated to amnesty for all political prisoners in the U.S., organizers outlined a year-long campaign to link the anti-1992 celebrations with the demand to free the over 100 imprisoned Puerto Rican, Black, Native American, Mexican and white activists. The campaign around the Puerto Rican prisoners has already included outreach to and endorsements from a broad range of elected officials, religious institutions and progressive organizations, both on the island and the mainland.

For more information about ongoing education and organizing, contact Lesbian and Gay Folks Supporting Political Prisoners, P.O. Box 282, New York, NY 10025, (212) 969-8598.

Election

Continued from page 3

local residents.

Gay and lesbian concerns

"When someone calls me, I don't ask what their sexual preference is, my job is to help them," Kelly said at the debate in response to a charge that he has not responded to gay and lesbian concerns. He left unchallenged references by Cronin to a speech Kelly delivered to the city council in June arguing against the Family Protection Act. The act would have allowed residents of Boston to define their families, in part, for the purposes of hospital visitation and parent-teacher conferences.

"I don't object to two consenting adults living together ... but don't ask me to put a stamp of approval" on such relationships, he stated in the speech. The passage of the Family Protection Act, he added, would be "undermining something that is very basic to the American way ... the traditional family: a man and woman in holy matrimony."

'White flight' vs. diversity

Cronin, whose candidacy is based in part on his reputation as a coalition-builder among the many racial groups represented in the South End where he lives, blasted Kelly for statements he made at a recent city council meeting in which he expressed concern that "full integration" was causing white people to flee the city. "We in the South End cherish our diversity," Cronin stated.

"I said the white people are fleeing the city for a number of reasons," Kelly told GCN, adding that he was alarmed that "the complexion of the city is changing."

"If middle income minorities were replacing middle income whites who were fleeing," Kelly said, "maybe it would be okay.... But low-income minorities are replacing middle-income whites." "We're talking about poor people ... some of whom don't work, and their numbers are increasing," he concluded.

During the debate, Kelly said he favored a 25 percent cut in the school budget, a proposal Cronin later called racist. "The numbers indicate it's a school system of predominantly minority children," he told GCN, adding to an earlier statement in which he accused Kelly of "mortgaging the future of

our children for the sake of not raising taxes on wealthy individuals and businesses."

After coming in well behind Kelly in last month's preliminary elections, Cronin faces an uphill battle if he is to win the seat Nov. 5. However, Cronin described his campaign as part of a larger, long-term effort in the South End and citywide to elect more progressives.

But after receiving three times as many votes as Kelly in the South End during the preliminaries, Cronin sees an added benefit to his campaign: he said he hopes it will convince city officials to redraw the city council districts. "If we don't win this time, we're getting the ball rolling," he said, adding, "The South End and what it represents is far too valuable an idea to be represented by a racist, homophobic and sexist" city councilor.

Idaho

Continued from backpage

its audacity, Van Sant has actually grafted onto his road movie the basic Prince Hal/Falstaff plot from *Henry IV* and applied it to Scott's relationship to the chicken-queen cokehead Bob (William Richert).

Some of Shakespeare's lines are spoken verbatim, others are fractured with contemporary images and slang. Thus, Hal's famous speech to the drunken Falstaff becomes, "What do you care? You wouldn't look at a clock unless the hours were lines of coke, dials looked like the signs of gay bars, or Time itself was a fair hustler in black leather." While many have found that Van Sant's wholesale adaptation of the Bard is merely pretentious, its basic role in the film is to reinforce the overriding theme of the quest for the legitimate father. But more than *Henry IV's* theme is appropriate here, Van Sant is making a tacit recognition of Shakespeare's world view that there is a moral and social order passed from father to son.

In the hands of another gay male director—one more interested in working within the framework of what has been considered a traditional gay sensibility—*My Own Private Idaho* might have totally become Mike's story: the gay outcast who is sainted for his persecuted state in life. Van Sant plays with this theme, but doesn't develop it very far; he is ultimately less concerned with the outcasts than with those who are able to reintegrate or renegotiate themselves into the social structure. Although the character of Mike (as well as some of the other hustlers) plays an important part in the film, the real emotional weight of the story is placed on the straight Scott and his life decisions.

My Own Private Idaho comes at an interesting time in mainstream filmmaking. Here we have an openly gay filmmaker who is avowedly not very interested in what is traditionally seen as a gay male sensibility and who has made a film that deals with some aspects of male homosexuality in a manner that is quite unlike what would be done by other gay or straight directors.

My Own Private Idaho is a fascinating film—Gus Van Sant clearly has a unique cinematic vision and a startling way of seeing a fractured contemporary world—but it is also a curious one. Perhaps it is a radical break from that elusive entity we have come to label a "gay sensibility" or maybe it is an attempt to redefine it, place it in other contexts and give it new parameters. Certainly, any new images of gay sexuality are welcome in a culture that increasingly promotes queer invisibility, but whether queer audiences will take to Van Sant's vision of gay alienation—as well as his own alienation from gay life—remains to be seen.

Bisexuals

Continued from page 1

The issue of domestic partnerships was another topic of difference in the workshop. In some European countries (including the Netherlands and Sweden), unmarried partnerships are common. "Respectable" middle-class heterosexuals often live together for years and raise children without being married. There is no equivalent to our society's concept of "living in sin," and the idea of the "illegitimacy" of a child of unmarried parents is weak or non-existent. It was felt by many that the prevalence of such partnerships among opposite-sex couples makes it easier for same-sex couples to live together as partners. Unfortunately, European societies have not come much further than the U.S. in terms of recognizing and accepting relationships between more than two people.

The conference organizers did not seem as conscious of gender parity and participation by people of color as organizers are in the U.S. Whether someone was a woman or a person of color was considered less important than their ideas or their political lean-

Continued on page 11

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Uncle Thomas

Continued from page 6

And among the Hill/Thomas witnesses at the hearing, I felt I was watching a number of self-helping, bootstrap-rising, young Black people in institutions with no understanding that an ethic of individualism can undermine collective political mobilization.

Nationalist rhetoric also makes it impossible to recognize our differing class interests at the same time that we work out coalitions that benefit large numbers of African-Americans. We have to recognize that Black middle-class interests are different than those of the white middle-class nor the Black working and poor classes. Yet the Black middle-class both needs a selectively mobilized Black community and acceptance by a segment of the white middle-class. Nationalist ideology does not help us face this contradiction.

Silent on Black women

Because of nationalists, we have a much better understanding of the ways that African-American men suffer in this society. The Black Man as the Endangered Species informs all our discussions on race. Thomas tapped into this understanding when he alluded to the lynching of uppity Black men. He spoke what Black conservative Glen Loury calls "the ugly truth—African-American men are portrayed as out of control sex fiends who need to be closely monitored by the state" (*Boston Globe*, Oct. 15, 1991). These words resonate with Black people because we could feel racism swirling all around Thomas. Unfortunately, only the right wing moved to explain this racism.

I agree with Loury that many of Thomas' opposition could only see his performance as what liberal columnist Thomas Oliphant of the *Boston Globe* called "the monomaniacal rantings of someone lacking a judicial temperament and unable to cope with the huge chips on his shoulders." In contrast, many African-Americans saw what Loury described as "dignity, determination and decency" (*Boston Globe*, Oct. 15, 1991). We also knew that it was plain wrong to believe that just because a Black woman indicted Thomas, no racism could be involved. We know all too well the way that our own people can act, both wittingly and unwittingly, as puppets for white racists.

The second Thomas hearings revealed that the nationalists help us understand the racism Black men face, but they were silent about the experiences of Black women. We knew a great deal about the lynching of Black men in the defense of the white race, for the supposed protection of white womanhood. But the Black community had few skills for identifying with Hill's vulnerabilities. No nationalists came forward with language about the rape of Black women by slave masters. I felt like I was watching the gang rape of an enslaved Black woman. And I kept remembering that no man—Black or white—has been hanged for sexually abusing a Black woman. I heard no defense of our womanhood.

Instead Thomas was able to tap into the nationalist-sponsored belief that African-American women are partly responsible for the endangerment of African-American men. We, especially those of us who are professionals and/or feminists, are said to have allied with white interests against Black men. Any strategic alliance with white women is seen as a clear indication that we are traitors to the race. I wish liberals and mainstream feminists did understand race. Instead they accept the terms that set up Clarence Thomas as an African-American and Anita Hill as a woman.

Both white liberals and Black nationalists assume that African-American women could not have our own race and gender-based reasons for opposing Thomas. Many Black people wanted to separate her allegations from "the issues." Yet, as a Black feminist, I saw her allegations as central. That is, they reveal Thomas' attitudes toward women, particularly Black women, and indicate that he will very probably fail to safeguard our rights.

As Hill implied, he was more interested in power over a vulnerable Black woman than he was in having sex with that woman. In this case, the issue of pornography and morality got confused with power relations in which a male boss could keep a close associate off balance but under his control. In my heart I felt that his response to Hill's allegations was consistent with the way Thomas treated his own sister. He spoke disparagingly of her acceptance of welfare when she had quit her job to take care of an elderly family member. Many Black feminists found such insensitivity to his sister and other poor Black women offensive.

Thomas mobilized nationalist discourse precisely because it does not take African-American women to participate in defining the race. Hill could be read out of the race as, at best, an unwitting puppet of white femi-

nists and white male liberals and as, at worse, a calculating feminist/lesbian traitor to the race. That's scary stuff for a Black feminist lesbian like me!

The hearings make it clear that we need to ask why a woman's loyalty to the race goes through a much more rigorous test than a man's. Hill was held accountable but Thomas was forgiven all. Of course, nationalists were not alone in their failure. Bourgeois white feminists, white liberals and the civil rights lobby could not see that racism and sexism intersected in the way Hill was treated by Thomas and the U.S. Senate. Until we bring such intersections into our political discourses, Black women will have no room to speak.

This article was written for the Resist Newsletter.

Fran White is a professor at Hampshire College and a member of the Board of Directors of Resist. Resist is a Somerville-based foundation funding social change projects since 1967. For more information about Resist, call (617) 623-5110.

Bisexuals

Continued from page 10

ings, emphasizing the greater importance of ideological over identity politics in Europe. A presentation promisingly entitled *Bisexuality in the Third World* turned out to be a white researcher discussing the sexual behavior of Africans in the context of AIDS prevention, pointing up some differences in how U.S. activists and non-native European speakers of English use the language.

Other cultural differences were evident in the city of Amsterdam, an ideal site for the conference. The city is known for its international atmosphere and for its acceptance of minority sexualities and tolerance of sexual expression. (Many claim that this acceptance is a recent development, and is considerably stronger in the cities.) Sexual displays in the form of open, legal prostitution, sex shows and pornography shops are ubiquitous.

Whether due to or despite this sexual openness and the prevalence of the sex industry, Amsterdam feels much less threatening for a woman alone than most U.S. cities, and the prevailing attitudes toward sex and sexuality seem much healthier. Sex and nudity may be seen as improper in certain contexts, but not as evil or sinful.

Several American activists hoping to collect Dutch queer political T-shirts and buttons were disappointed to find that these did not exist (or were very hard to find). Most European queers do not announce their sexuality in this manner, even if they are out and involved in bisexual or gay organizations. Both Dutch and North American bisexuals and homosexuals voiced their belief that the greater societal acceptance of non-heterosexuality makes being bisexual or gay seem like an acceptable option rather than a political statement.

While the efforts of groups in the U.S. (such as Queer Nation) to solidify a queer cultural identity are exciting, there is something to be said for a society in which one's sexuality is not considered the central feature of one's identity, and which lacks the "us" (gay) vs. "them" (straight) warfare mentality that often leaves bisexuals feeling caught in the middle and not really belonging to either "side."

Because several European governments sponsor comprehensive AIDS education (there were copies of the state-produced booklet "Safer Sex for Leatherman" at the Amsterdam visitor's bureau) and provide universal health care, the AIDS activist movement is not as active or as visible as in the U.S. (although there was an ACT UP/Amsterdam "Boycott Marlboro" poster hanging in the anarchist bookstore).

In contrast to the U.S., homo, het, and bi people dance and interact in discos with one another seemingly without regard for sexual orientation, women with women, women with men, and men with men. In Dutch the preferred terms are "homo," "het," and "bi"; these are not considered derogatory, and do not carry the political implications or double meaning of our "gay," "queer," and "straight." While there was a high level of integration of the sexualities in the Netherlands, several conference participants spoke of deep divisions between gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals in other countries, especially England and Germany.

The opportunity to examine difference in how sexual identity is thought of and how bisexual and gay and lesbians organize politically in different countries and cultures is a valuable feature of international conferences. The next international bisexual conference will be held in London, probably in the fall of 1992. Some North American organizers have already proposed the idea of hosting an international conference in New York City in 1994 to coincide with the twenty-fifth anniversary of Stonewall. □

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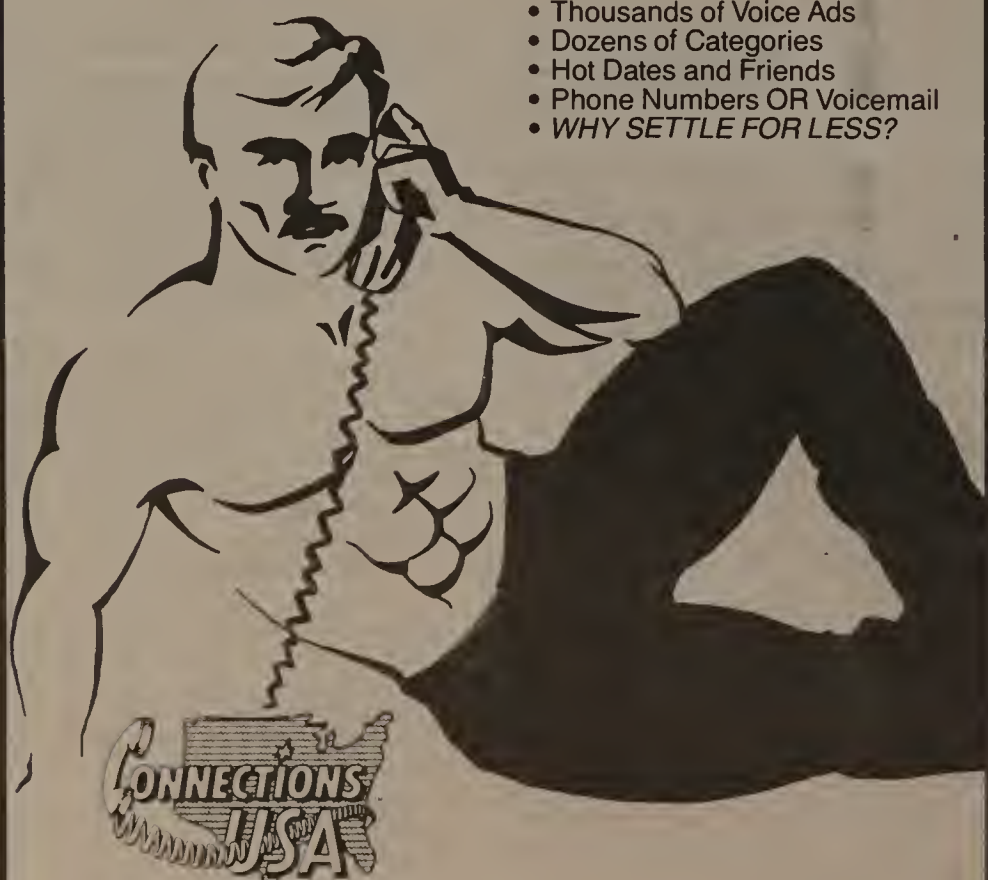
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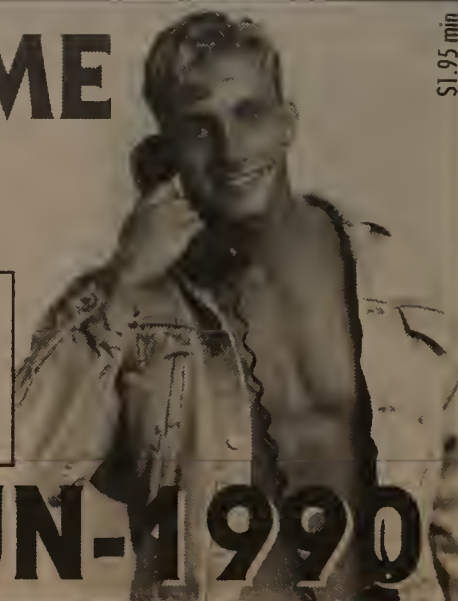
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PERSONALS

GCN REPLY BOXES

Replies to GCN Boxes should be addressed to GCN Box#, Gay Community News, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA 02116. This applies to GCN Boxes only, not to P.O. Boxes. Mail may be addressed to GCN boxes for weeks after the issue in which it appears. Check carefully to be sure you have the correct box number!

ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES

1-900-740-6600

Private mailboxes \$1.39 minu-

SEARCHING FOR...

Edward Anthony Connelly attended Tulane 1980; Libra; app. 30 years old. Please contact Jay Sanders 1033 Franklin Road, Ste 11-153, Marietta, GA 30067-8060

IS THIS THE RIGHT PLACE

for a GWM, 72, living on the southeast coast, well-educated, politically left, still clicking, works part time, owns his own home, to find himself a mate? If you're venturesome, your letter will get one from me. GCN Box 135 (23)

Gay man—kind, honest, witty, *out*—looking for same for monogamous relationship. I'm 31 and spend lots of time swimming, reading, writing, going to museums, listening to music—especially Beethoven, Bartók, Coltrane and contemporary experimentalists. I'm a vegetarian, my politics to the left, and I'm active in the gay and lesbian community. To me, the only important part of your ethnicity and religion is that you're proud of them. Idiosyncrasies are highly encouraged. Your response will surely beget mine. GCN Box 901.

MADE IN GERMANY

German GM, new in town, seeks real friends for talking, listening, movies, dining, fun and other social events. I am 33, 6'1", brown hair and moustache. Call 262-1297

NEW GIRL IN TOWN

Even though I've been in Boston a year, I still feel like I'm new in town. Body builder type who sometimes wishes she had no politics but can't help being socially aware seeks cute leatherdyke who knows who she is, what she wants and is able to play. GCN 009 (12)

We knew Zhang in China '87-'88, a closeted Chinese gay man (government says gays don't exist). Desperately wants to come to U.S., geology gradschool. We are raising money for him. Please help or write. Franny, Friends of Zhang, Box 1601, Brookline, MA 02146 (23)

Wanted; pal for slow and easy mirror J.O., muscle comparisons, even kinky scenes like self S/M. "No" inhibitions; physical contact not, per se. Me: Mid '30's, BB, cut; you: muscled, uncut. Smokers, et cetera A++. Photol! GCN Box 923

Midwest GWF seeks Pen Pals, New England area for friendship, possible visits. All replies answered. Let's be friends. GCN Box 190 (15)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OUTWRITE '92 IN BOSTON

OutWrite '92 Planning Committee seeks eager beavers and diligent domo homos to serve on conference working groups. OutWrite '92, the national lesbian and gay writer's conference, will be here March 20-22, 1992 in Boston and will be co-sponsored by *OutLook* and *Gay Community News*.

Radio/Cable for/about us. Send \$1 & SASE for program list to John Zeh, 1455 Chapin St. NW, Washington, DC 20009-4510

SAVE THE CATS

Desperately seeking home for 2 adult female (spayed) Himalayans. Affectionate and lovable and free. Must give up for health reasons—mine, not theirs. Help! They don't deserve the Animal Shelter. 242-4807. (15)

Forthcoming Canadian anthology: *Bloodlines: Writings by Lesbian Sisters*. Send writing about you and your lesbian sister(s) and/or queries to: Jan & Lynn Andrews, Editors, P.O. Box 4273, Stn. E, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1S 5B3—before January 31st, 1992. (16)

HELP WANTED

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force and the NGLTF Policy Institute work for civil rights through education, organizing, lobbying and direct action. Combined budget is 1.2 million. Requirements: 5+ years experience in non-profit fundraising; major donor, planned giving, foundation and corporate grantwriting programs; budget development; staff supervision; event management; excellent oral and written skills. Salary commensurate with experience. EOE. Resume, references, and salary requirements by 10/31/91 to: Development Search, NGLTF, 1734 14th Street NW Washington DC 20009-4309. (16)

Campaign Coordinator/Organizer

Motivated, self-starter with high-level community or political organizing experience to lead state-wide campaign to increase Massachusetts funding for AIDS. Minimum of 5 years' organizing experience; experience in the AIDS community; knowledge of Massachusetts politics. The successful candidate will work with a coalition of AIDS service providers and advocates throughout the Commonwealth.

If you are interested in this position, please forward a cover letter and resume to: Mike Savage, Fenway Community Health Center, 7 Haviland Street, Boston, MA 02115. FCHC is committed to equal opportunity employment. People of color, women, lesbians and gay men are encouraged to apply.

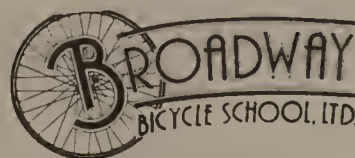


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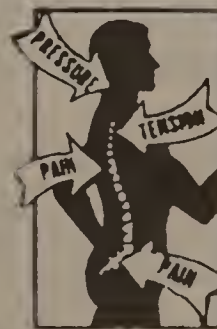


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No ads accepted over the telephone. Please clip and return this ad form to

GCN Classifieds, 62 Berkeley Street, Boston, MA. 02116

CATEGORY

☐ PERSONALS

☐ ANNOUNCEMENTS

☐ HELP WANTED

☐ HOUSING WANTED

☐ ROOMMATE WANTED

☐ APARTMENTS

☐ SUMMER RENTALS

☐ MASSAGE

☐ FOR SALE

☐ PUBLICATIONS

☐ ORGANIZATIONS

☐ SERVICES

☐ RIDES

☐ MOVERS

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T-shirt says it all. Size M-L-XL. Only \$14.95. Order by December 2 for Guaranteed Christmas delivery. Check or M/O. Bizall 1128 P.V. Rd. #205 Dept-11 Cleveland, Ohio 44134-6711. (18)

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ROOMMATES

TRY GCN'S GUARANTEED ROOMMATE AD

All roommate and housemate ads that are prepaid for two weeks we will run until you find a roommate.

Ads are *not* automatically renewed. You must call in every additional week you want the ad to run. Phone calls for renewals will be accepted on Fridays until 3 pm. 426-4469.

TWO NICE GIRLS

and their charming cats seek groovy dyke to share our veggie, easygoing household. Sunny, spacious, close to T and bicycle path. We're political, independent dykes in a communicative home. Sound like you'd fit in? Call 524-2952. Rent is a low, low \$216+.

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MELROSE: Handsome mahogany furnished room in large, updated, fine Victorian home. Central air, washer/dryer, offstreet parking, cable, deck, gardens, and many extras. Enjoy the quiet, security, spaciousness of the suburbs while only 17 minutes to downtown Boston from convenient T stop. Nonsmoking male. \$395 including utilities. 665-6082 (10)

BROCKTON AREA

Professional GM seeks roommate to share 2-bedroom home. New kitchen, W/W, A/C, DW, W/D, security deposit and references. (508) 238-9753 (15)

QUEER CAMBRIDGEPORT COOP

We're looking for wimmin, women or girlz for mixed dyke/fag home. Our fabulously beautiful longstanding co-op is conveniently located in a safe, friendly neighborhood. Five minutes from red line. 864-1466

EAST ARLINGTON—WALK TO T

2 lesbians plus cat seek lesbian 25+ to share our home. Good communication, sense of humor, open to racial diversity. No smoke, drugs, minimum alcohol. Beautiful, spacious apartment \$366+, 643-2426.

Framingham convenient location—Amethyst household looking for mature lesbian female to share apt. \$350 per month includes all. Call Ginny (508) 820-4354. (15)

BRIGHAM CIRCLE HARVARD MED AREA
2 professional GM seek 3rd to share 3 bedroom. Beautiful, fully renovated, with hardwood floors, washer/dryer, dishwasher, modern bath, huge eat-in kitchen, large sunny living room, ceiling fans. 2 minute walk to T, shopping, etc. \$350 a month+ in friendly, residential neighborhood. 731-2205. (14)

WALK TO RIVER & RED LINE

GM, SF, SM seek F, 25+ for Cambridgeport semi-coop home. Share warmth, humor, left & feminist politics, food, some meals. W/D, deck, porch, 1 cat, no more please. No smoke. \$305+. Available now. 354-6740. (14)

CAMBRIDGEPORT

2 LFs seek same for 3 floor house. Parking near T; have cat and dog. Call in a.m. or p.m. \$286/mo for bedroom and study. 661-6771 (hrsh)

PONDSIDE J.P.

3 LFs seek 4th for big beautiful apt. Friendly, independent house; porches, w/d, parking. Two rooms of your own wired for private phone. No smokers, no pets. \$365+. Avail. Nov. or Dec. 1. 522-9760 (16)

SOBER ROOMMATE WANTED 12/1

GM 28 and friendly housecat seek L or GM to share spacious apt. on Cambridge/Belmont line. Near bus. 7 min. ride to Harvard Sq. No alcohol/drugs/"trick traffic." I am smoker (cigs. OK). 12-steppers esp. welcome. Call Michael 484-1389 leave msg. (17)

ALLSTON

4 Queer Ls seeking 2 more to share sober, semi-coop, no hassle household. Near T and bus. 230 and 254/mnth + utl. 254-0448 (16)

FUN, FRIENDLY APT IN J.P.

1 LF, 1 BiF seek 1 LF for progressive, semi-coop, veggie apt \$250+ 4 blks from T, 3 blks from Centre St. Lots of commonspace, yard, driveway, sm. porch. We are non-smoke, sober, fun. 522-9351 (10)

LF (and 1 cat) seek same for 2BDR in Arlington duplex. Nice location. No smoke, drugs, min. alcohol. \$375+/mo call Kate: 646-6947 (14)

GREAT HOME

2 LFs and dog seek L to share friendly, comfortable house with yard in Somerville. 5 min. walk to Davis Sq and T. No smoke, drugs, min. alcohol. \$323 +, 776-6612 (18)

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Best, sunny, 3 br, 1st floor apartment with new gas heat, fireplace, hardwood floors, lovely backyard, parking, walk to T, avail Nov 1st. \$990 + utils. (can negotiate) Please call: 924-0851

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GCN'S FAX (617) 426-2723



We are looking for proofreaders for Wednesday nights. If you are interested in proofreading or any of the other exciting volunteer opportunities available at Gay Community News, please call

426-4469.

PRISONERS SEEKING FRIENDS

Mike Riegle is leaving *GCN* after ten years of pioneering the Prisoner Project. He will compile a book of past letters from prisoners to *GCN* over the years, and still will help out at *GCN* and Prison Book. Former typesetter Rebecca Lavine will be following in his footsteps. She is very excited and is looking forward to hearing from prisoners to know what direction they'd like to see the project take. Mike says to the prisoners, "Thank you for all you've taught me. It's been hard but very fine." Please feel free to keep writing Mike here at *GCN*.

Prisoner art sought!!! It doesn't matter if you think of yourself as an "artist" or not—we'd still like to see it if you'd like to show it. Art submissions might be published in next year's Prisoner Poetry issue, or maybe you'll see some here in this column. Send to Prisoner Art Project, 62 Berkeley St., Boston, MA, 02116. Thank you... Rebecca

Hi out there world, I'm a fun loving bi male looking for a pen friend and maybe more. I seek to write other bi males and 100% gay males. Must be in the age group of 30 to 50. I'm 5'8 tall, blue eyes, blonde hair, 28 years young and hung. If you are interested let's get together and have some fun. Carl Hawkins, #127894, Rt. 3, Box 59, Rosharon, TX 77583

GM, romantic, monogamous, handsome, 6', blue eyes, brown hair, 155 lbs., non-smoker, athlete, writer, inventor, 7/28/60, lost partner of 4 years, looking for stable, loving, lasting relationship. No games. Released at end of 1992, serving for sex, other prisoners may write. Please, not TVs or TS's. Picture would be nice. Please write today. I might be the one! D.L. Mann #165035, P.O. Box E, Jackson, Michigan 49204.

Seeking correspondence with open minded people. I'm 31, 6'6, 200 lbs., with a variety of interests. Am into pornographic materials, and can receive magazines—straight stuff—from individuals, so instead of putting them up in the attic, share them with me. Also looking forward to sharing thoughts, dreams and more. Make my day, and write Tom Butler, #46787-079, Shelby, P.O. Box 34550, Memphis, TN 38134

Seeking that special someone, to pull through the end of this sentence and share good times and natural romance with. I like a good sense of style and creativity. Can count on sincere, honest, loyalty. I'm tall and attractive 6'1, 175 lbs., lt brown hair and blue green eyes. 3/17/65. If you'd like to just be friends that's fine also. Chris Whitesell #127439, P.O. Box 97, McAlester Okla. 74502.

My name will be Belladonna, I am a queen age 27. I get out by '96 max. I am a guitarist and Luthier from Hollywood; I like Dio, Bang and Olufsen, Corvettes, transsexuals and rimming. I love correspondence and will answer every queen P.D.Q. Nolkemper #D01822

Women seeking friends

My time is up in July of '92. I'm Black, 25 years of age, 5'7. I love sports, reading and writing. I have been here for 2 years, and I don't receive mail from the streets. I would like it very much for someone who I can relate to would write. The women here are trying to drive me crazy. No one can relate to me and my seriousness concerning homosexuality. Please reply. Regina Smith, W-361-3, Miller B 130L, Frontera, CA 91720

I'm the original Blonde with blue eyes—lonely. A "damsel in distress." Come rescue me! A letter when you're down is like medication for the mind. Cheyanne Driskell, #14144, 1479 Collins Ave, Marysville, OH 43030

women's/men symbol graphic

Gay male, 27 years old, 180 lbs, 6 ft. Brown hair, green eyes, extremely handsome, interests include: weight lifting, swimming and hiking. Looking for sincere and honest friendships, possibly more. Your photo gets mine, write soon. Donald S. Wiswall, One Administration Road, O.C.C.C. Bridgewater, MA 02324

5'11 tall, 180 lbs., 35 yrs. old. Brown hair (what's left of it!). Hazel eyes. I enjoy the outdoors, hiking, camping, etc... I enjoy staying in good shape, lifting weights, playing handball and jogging. I'm looking for pen-pals who are not afraid to express themselves and who can listen. Michael Howard, Arizona State Prison, P.O. Box 50788, Florence, AZ, 05232

I am Black-Chinese-Indian transsexual pre-op that is seeking a lovely friendship with someone who can relate to life itself. Kim Chow, C69380, P.O. Box 2000, M61030, Vacaville, CA 95696

GBM presently in prison, 28 years old, 5'4, 135 lbs., and lonely. Seeking GM pen pals who know how lonely life can be. Please write to: Robert Walker #22392, PO Box 1989, Ely, NV, 89301. I can't write to other prisoners.

Hi! I'm 29, 6'3, 155 lbs. I love to have sex with a hot man between the ages of 18 and 35, I especially like the dog style. I enjoy softball, swimming, dominos and horses. I'm lonely and would like some letters from you outside people, so please write me. Mike Kammerzell, P.O. Box 514-161115, Granite, OK 73547

GM, 21, looking for some free world pen-pals. I like music, reading, writing, drawing, sports, nature, and fun stuff. I am into NAMBLA which is why I'm here. Would like to get to hear from others like me, any age. Not looking for hand-outs, heart or head games. So take a chance, invest a stamp, what have ya got to lose? Thanks. Chaz Jones-AY6853, Drawer R, Huntingdon, PA. 16652

This lonely bi male prisoner (very young) wishes to correspond with men of the free world for friendship/possible relationship. I'm very sincere. Have pictures. Rick Ray, #406431, PO Box 16, Eastham Unit, Lovelady, TX. 75851

Very lonely Mexican-American who's looking for a very sincere pen-pal who would like to write as friends and hopefully start a relationship. Looking for gays, TVs or TS's in their 30 years or older. Write Mike Hidalgo, CO9215, PO Box 29, Represa, CA. 95671. Sorry, I can't write to other prisoners.

Calendar

Cambridge ♦ Spend an evening with Michael Callen. Cambridge City Hall, City Council Chambers. 7:30 -9:30 pm. \$5 suggested donation, no one will be turned away.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged! Listings may also be sent electronically by the Please specify if event is or is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings. Including time, date, place, and a contact person. All listings must be typed. Please note that listings are printed only as space allows; we regret that we cannot print every submission.

Phone numbers listed are in the 617 area code, and cities are in Massachusetts, unless otherwise noted.

26 SATURDAY

Cambridge ♦ DOB annual elections. 8:00pm. Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass Ave. Info: 661-3633.

Attleboro ♦ Halloween potluck sponsored by Triboro Triangles will be held at an Attleboro farm. Please bring a donation and RSVP by Oct. 20. Info: Triboro Triangle, P.O. Box 2751, Attleboro Falls, MA 02763.

Boston ♦ Shelley Smith signs new novel "Edge of Passion" at Glad Day Bookshop, 673 Boylston St. from 4-6p.m.

Providence, RI ♦ "Men Meeting Men" workshop sponsored by Rhode Island Project/AIDS. 10:00am-4:00pm. Participants must register. Info: Derek (410) 831-5522. Wheelchair accessible.

Boston ♦ New Speakers Training sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Speakers Bureau of Boston. 10:00am-5:00pm at the UMass Harbor Campus, Dorchester Science Center. Info: Gary 354-0133.

Springfield ♦ Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt Display. Hours from 10:00am-7:00pm. Opening Ceremonies 10:00-11:00am at Scibelli Hall, STCC Springfield. Info: Sonja Larson (413) 586-2016.

Cambridge ♦ "Haunting- Ghost Stories for the Brave at Heart" by master storyteller Jennifer Justice. 8:00pm at the First Congregational Church, 11 Garden St., Harvard Square. Tickets are \$10. Info: 776-4514.

Atlanta, GA ♦ Native American Film & Video as part of the Third World Film Festival. Free screenings at 2:00pm. Info: (404) 653-7146.

Cambridge ♦ Wild Women visit Salem Witches Museum. Sponsored by DOB, carpool from Cambridge. Info: Steph 625-9551.

Waltham ♦ Watch City's Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual group is having a Pumpkin Party. 8 p.m. Info: call 893-0742 for location.

27 SUNDAY

Boston ♦ "A Pilgrimage for Life " a four-mile walk. Reception at the Second Church will follow the walk. Registration begins at 1:30pm. The walk starts at the Second Church, Mass. Pike and Highland St. All proceeds go to the Interfaith AIDS Ministry Direct Services. Info: 969-8511.

Cambridge ♦ Tricia Langlois in concert at Christophers Restaurant, Porter Sq. 1920 Mass. Ave. 8:00 pm \$6.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Parents' and co-parents' group, newly forming. 1:00-3:00pm. DOB at the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. Info: 661-3633.

Boston ♦ Peter Cameron will read from "FAR-FLUNG" at Glad Day Bookshop at 7:00 pm. 763 Boylston St.

Brookline ♦ Am Tikva, Boston's Community of Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Jews will hold its annual planning meeting at 11 am at Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon Street in Brookline. Brunch will be served. Info: 926-2536.

Boston ♦ Boston/Mass. Breast Cancer Coalition Rally and march. 12 noon. Boston Common, near corner of Tremont and Park Streets. March to Gov't Center.

28 MONDAY

Boston ♦ "The Immune/Emotional Link" with Patty Martin, MSW. 7:00-9:00pm. Sponsored by the Boston Living Center. At the BLC, 140 Clarendon St. (YWCA), 7th fl. Info: 236-1012.

29 TUESDAY

Boston ♦ Boston/Women's Rally to support Rosaria Salerno for Boston City Councilor. 7:30-9:00pm at the Old South Church on the corner of Boylston and Dartmouth Streets. Suggested contribution \$10.

Cambridge ♦ Spend an evening with Michael Callen. Cambridge City Hall, City Council Chambers. 7:30 -9:30 pm. \$5 suggested donation, no one will be turned away.

Framingham ♦ Framingham Regional Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (FRAGLY) will be going to the movies. Leaving from the Civic League Building, 214 Concord St. at 6:00 pm. Event open to youth under 22. Info: (508) 872-5218.

30 WEDNESDAY

Boston ♦ "Caring for Someone with AIDS." Free workshop for those who care for a person with AIDS at home. 6:30-9:30pm. AIDS ACTION Committee, 131 Clarendon St., 4th fl. Sponsored by AAC and Dimock Community Health Center. Register by Oct. 28. Info: 437-6200 x 343.

Kirkwood ♦ "Dances, dreams, and broken glass: lesbian poetry and fiction at alfa" 6:30pm at the ALFA House, 64 Clay St., N.E., off Boulevard Drive. Info: 523-7455.

Springfield ♦ "AIDS Coaction: What We Need to Know and Do," a public education seminar on the Springfield College campus. Room 233, Locklin Hall 7:00-9:00pm. Info: James Genascl (413) 788-3221.

Boston ♦ "The Shadow Box" will be playing at the Triangle Theater Company at the Paramount Penthouse Theater, 58 Berkeley St., 8:00pm. Tickets are \$15 except the first Sat. Press Opening which are \$25. Playing through 11/23. Info: 426-3550.

1 FRIDAY

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian/Gay/BI Halloween '50s Dance. 8:15-midnight. Jitterbug lesson 8:15-9:00. Costumes encouraged. Smoke/alcohol free. \$5. At the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, Harvard Square, Cambridge. Info: 629-2219.

Cambridge ♦ Black Rose Lectures will present a lecture by George Katsiaficas entitled "The Revolutionary Theory and Practice of Herbert Marcuse." 8 pm at MIT in building 9, room 150. 105 Mass. Ave. Free.

Boston ♦ David Scondras, City Councilor, gives talk entitled "The Real State of the City", 7:30-10:30. At the Community Church of Boston in Copley Square.

Brookline ♦ Am Tikva, Boston's Community of Lesbian, Bisexual and Gay Jews, will hold Shabbat services at 8 pm at Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St. in Brookline. Bring something sweet/dairy/veggie to share. Info: 926-2536.

2 SATURDAY

Boston ♦ "Taking the Test," a workshop for gay men who are thinking about taking the HIV-antibody test. Sponsored by the AIDS ACTION Committee. 1:00-4:30pm. at 131 Clarendon St., 4th fl. Info: 437-6200 x 499.

Boston ♦ "The Lost Boys" at the Friday Night Video Series at the Gay and Lesbian Community Center. 7:00pm. \$2. 338 Newbury St., 2nd floor.

Cambridge ♦ Adult Children of Heterosexuals in concert at Nightstage 8:00 pm. \$10.50. Also appearing Tigresa.

Boston ♦ Suffolk Student Theatre presents two one-act plays at 8 pm at the C. Walsh Theatre at Suffolk University, 55 Temple St., Beacon Hill, Boston Info: 573-8282. Free.

4 MONDAY

Amherst ♦ KALEIDOSCOPE, a group for older lesbians, gays, bisexuals and friends in the Pioneer Valley, holds its monthly meeting at 6:30 pm at the Bangs Community Center on Boltwood Walk. Info: (413) 525-2188. Or write to KALEIDOSCOPE, P.O.Box 1123, Greenfield, MA 01302.

Cambridge ♦ Kate Rushin poetry reading at the Gilman Room, Agassiz Theatre, Radcliffe. Sponsored by the Harvard Gay and Lesbian Caucus. 8:00 pm, reception to follow. Free.

5 TUESDAY

Newton ♦ Lesbian school teachers/administrators potluck, 6:30 pm. Info: (617) 492-1822.

Boston ♦ "Herbal Therapies for HIV," Fenway Community Health Center, 7 Haviland St., Boston. 7:00-9:00 pm. Free. Info: 267-0900 x287.

7 THURSDAY

Cambridge ♦ Essex Hemphill will read from his forthcoming book "Ceremonies" at 7 pm in room 6-120, MIT campus. Info: 253-3599.

8 FRIDAY

Cambridge ♦ Planned Parenthood League of Mass. sponsored training "Current Strategies for Teaching Sex Ed." Also held on 11/9. 9-6 pm and 9-1 pm. Fee is \$160. 99 Bishop Allen Drive. Pre-registration encouraged. Call Jennifer Davis at 492-0518.

9 SATURDAY

Boston ♦ "Dancing in Time," third annual dance-a-thon to benefit AIDS ACTION Committee. 6-11 pm in the Ballroom of the Hynes Convention Center. Info: 266-6906.

Jamalca Plain ♦ Cattle Curtis in concert. A Gay Community News benefit. 8 pm at Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. Info: 983-9530.

SATURDAYS

Boston ♦ Frontrunners. Meet at Metropolitan Health Club for 2 to 5-mi. run along Charles. Lockers and showers \$1.00. 10am. Also: Tues. 11:45pm. at MHC; Wed. 6:45pm. at Hatch Shell; Sun. 3:00pm. at Jamalca Pond Boathouse. Info: Sara 524-4025...

Boston ♦ "Two-Steppin' for AIDS" Texas Two-stepping and line dancing for the HIV positive community and their friends. At the Boston Living Center, YWCA, 140 Clarendon St., 7th fl. Third Saturdays, 7:00-12:00pm. Donations go to direct services for people with AIDS. Info: 236-1012.

Cambridge ♦ Single Mothers' Support Group. Free drop-in group with child care, alternate Saturdays. Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 11am-12:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Boston ♦ Pink Flamigos. TV/TS of New England. 4 to 6p.m. 338 Newbury St., 2nd flr. 247-2927.

Boston TV ♦ PrideTime—Boston G/L TV, with Cynthia Pope. 7:30 p.m. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. Also on Cambridge Cable Channel 19, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, and on other systems; check your listings.



Jamalca Plain ♦ Women's Coffeehouse. Musical entertainment, usually. 8 p.m. Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. \$5 suggested donation. 983-9530.

SUNDAYS

Boston ♦ Boston Alliance of G/L Youth (BAGLY) Drop-In Center. St. John the Evangelist Church, 35 Bowdoin. (800) 42BAGLY.

Boston ♦ Work Issues Support Group. 2 to 4 p.m. G/L Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St.

Boston ♦ Boston Strikers Soccer Club. Weekly novice and club scrimmages. All levels. 3 p.m. Info: Erik 423-0929 or Jeff 876-7612.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Sports. Magazine Field, Memorial Dr. Spons. by DOB. Softball 4 to 6 p.m.; volleyball 6 p.m. 'til dark. \$1. Info: Steph 625-9551.

Provincetown ♦ Christian Healing Service. 5:30 p.m. 96 Bradford St. (P'Town AIDS Support Grp.) Pot luck dinner to follow. (508) 487-3866.

Boston ♦ Metropolitan Community Church Worship/Fellowship. 131 Cambridge St. (near Gov't Ctr.). 7 p.m. Info: Rev. Tanis 437-0420.

Boston ♦ Narcotics Anonymous. L/GM. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 8 p.m. 247-2927.

Boston ♦ The Gay Dating Show, WUNR 1600AM. 10:30pm-2:30 a.m.

Boston ♦ Different Strokes Swim Team. Coached work-outs for swimmers of all abilities. 10:15. Info: 767-0449 or 282-3110.

MONDAYS

Boston ♦ New Support Group for Recovering Women with HIV/AIDS. Sponsored by Women, Inc. Call Magda or Christine for a screening interview 442-6166.

Boston ♦ Positive Directions. Peer-led support group for HIV+ people. Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon. 12:25 p.m. 262-3456.

Boston ♦ Children Downhill Skiing Lessons. Monday nights at Nashoba Valley ski area. Info: Jim 843-3966.

Boston ♦ Monday Night Dinners for PWA's and Friends: about 100 people meeting every Monday at AAC for dinner. No reservations required. 6 p.m. AAC, 131 Clarendon St. 437-6200.

Dorchester ♦ Alcoholics Anonymous. First Parish Church, Mtg. Hs. Hill. Beginners 6:30, hardhats 8 p.m.

Boston ♦ Queer Nation meets 1st and 3rd Mondays at new location. Local 26, 62 Berkeley, 3rd Floor. 7:00pm.

Boston ♦ Boston Bisexual Women's Network Coordinating Comm. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

Worcester ♦ AIDS Project Worcester. A support group for family, friends, concerned others dealing with HIV. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

Boston ♦ Northern Lights Alternatives Monday Night Rap Group. Talk to others living with HIV. 38 Appleton St. 7:30-9 p.m. Info: Ann O'Rourke 694-0964.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Rap Group. The Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 8-10 p.m. 354-8807.

Cable TV ♦ "Between Takes." Often a g/l slant on events. Boston A3 Mondays 9:30 p.m. Cambridge CCTV Thursdays 8:30 p.m. Rhode Island Interconnect A Fridays 8:30 p.m. Other areas: check listings.

TUESDAYS

Providence, RI ♦ ACT UP/Rhode Island. Call for meeting place (401) 461-4191.

Gloucester ♦ Healing Circle / Positively Clean and Sober. Healing circle 6:30 to 8 p.m., open to anyone facing chronic or life-threatening illness. Pos. C&S 8 to 9 p.m., for people living with HIV and dealing with subst. abuse issues. N. Shore AIDS Project, 19 Pleasant St. (508) 283-0101.

Boston ♦ ACT UP/Boston. The Living Center, YWCA, 140 Clarendon St. 7 p.m. 49-ACTUP.

Cambridge ♦ Bisexual Women's Rap. The Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 7-8:30. 354-8807.

Medford Radio ♦ "We the People"—with feminist Sheila Parks. WMFO 91.5FM. 7-9a.m. Tufts U. radio.

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ G/B Men and Their Significant Others. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

Boston ♦ L/G Freedom Trail Band Rehearsals. No audition necessary. Mass College of Art, Longwood and Brookline Ave. 7:15 p.m. 266-0628.

WEDNESDAYS

Boston ♦ Women in the Building Trades will be offering free introductory workshops. 6:00-8:00pm from 10/30-12/4. At 555 Amory St. Call 524-3010 to pre-register or for info.

Boston ♦ Sales Networks Program for G/L Business Owners and Supporters of the Community. 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. The Center, 338 Newbury St., 2nd flr. Registration required: Marc Spencer 262-2400.

Hyde Park ♦ Women's Pick-Up Hockey. MDC Hyde Park Rink (near Dedham). 8 to 9 a.m. Info: Janice 326-1600 x350.

Boston ♦ Boston Alliance of G/L Youth (BAGLY). Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6p.m.; women and men meet separately 6:45 to 7:30; general meeting 7:30p.m. (800) 42BAGLY.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Al-Anon. Wheelchair accessible. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. 354-8807.

Springfield ♦ Names Project Meeting. New chapter with weekly quilting meetings. All welcome. Frontier. 19 Pearl St. 7 to 10 p.m. (413) 788-7459

Worcester ♦ Supporters of Worcester Area G/L Youth (SWAGLY). Social support grp. for youths 22 and under. 7 to 9 p.m. United Congregational Church, 6 Institute Road. 7 to 9 p.m. (508) 755-0005.

Boston ♦ Bisexual Adult Children of Alcoholics. Mass. General Hospital. 7:30 p.m. Info: Marge 259-1559.

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ who are in Substance Abuse Recovery. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7:30 to 9 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

Amherst ♦ Queer Nation meets 6:00-7:00pm at Bangs Community Center, 70 Boltwood Walk. Info: P.O. Box 202, Hadley, MA 01035 or (413) 584-4213.

THURSDAYS

Boston ♦ The Boston Monthly HIV Medical Update. 2nd Thursday of each month at 7:30pm. John Hancock Conference Center, 40 Trinity Place (near Copley green and Back Bay/South End Orange T stations). Info: 262-3456.

Somerville ♦ The Thursday Night Dinner Program offers meals to PWA's HIV+ and friends at the Methodist Church. One block from Davis Square Red Line Station. Info: 666-4130.

Boston ♦ Boston Area Rape Crisis Center drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Boston ♦ Names Project Quilting Bee — for the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Sewing supplies and support provided. Boston Living Ctr., 140 Clarendon St. 7th flr. 7 to 9 p.m. Info 451-9003.

Portsmouth, NH ♦ Out and About. A lesbian social and support group. Info: Keryn (603) 749-5852.

Provincetown ♦ Positive PWA Coalition Weekly Rap Session. 7:30. 155 Bradford St. Peer led. (508) 487-3998.

Boston ♦ The Group. Discussion and social hour. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 734-2076.

Boston ♦ L/G Ice Hockey Practices and Intersquad Scrimmages. All levels. 9 p.m. Gtr Bos. rink. Info: John 350-6063, Al 522-1408.

Cambridge ♦ GAMIT Study Break. (GAMIT = Gays at MIT.) GAMIT lounge, room 50-306, 142 Memorial Dr.

FRIDAYS

Watertown ♦ GLOW: G/L of Watertown. 395-4664.

Boston ♦ GCN Friday Night Stuffing Party. Come stuff the paper, eat pizza, and make new friends. GCN, 62 Berkeley St. 5 p.m. 426-4469.

Boston ♦ Positive Directions. Peer-led support group for HIV+ people. Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon. 7:30 p.m. 262-3456.

Somerville ♦ Swing and C/W Dance for G/L/B. 8 p.m., swing and two-step lessons; 9 p.m. to midnight, dancing. Smoke / alcohol free, juice bar. Air cond. \$5. "On Broadway," 880 Broadway. 623-9532.

Provincetown ♦ Safe Sex Brigade and Anti-L/G/B Violence Campaign. Volunteers meet on steps of P'Town Post Office Friday and Sunday nights at 11:30 p.m. through Labor Day. Info: ACT UP (508) 487-2063.

Hindsights

My Own Private Idaho.

Written and directed by Gus Van Sant. With River Phoenix, Keanu Reeves, James Russo, William Richert, Chiara Caselli, Udo Kier, Grace Zabriskie. At the Nickelodeon, Boston; Harvard Square, Cambridge; and other theaters nationally.

Reviewed by Michael Bronski

The extraordinary eagerness with which gay male audiences awaited Gus Van Sant's film *My Own Private Idaho* is a testimony not only to the director's previous displays of talent — the little seen but near cult-status *Mala Noche* as well as the award-winning and more mainstream *Drugstore Cowboy*—but to the dearth of any queer screen images. It is no surprise then that the hearts and cocks of gay men everywhere were stirred when it was announced that cute, well-built teen heartthrobs River Phoenix and Keanu Reeves were going to play male hustlers in Van Sant's latest.

But now that the film has been released (to considerable critical acclaim), there are some rumblings of discontent and unhappiness. Idiosyncratic and defiantly downbeat, *My Own Private Idaho*, it turns out, is not as gay a film as some would have expected from one of Hollywood's few openly gay directors.

After seeing *My Own Private Idaho*, it is no wonder: This is not the positive gay love story for which some had hoped. Sure, Phoenix and Reeves play hustlers, but the former is a somewhat dimwitted, addle-brained young man with narcolepsy, and the latter is ostensibly heterosexual. And while *My Own Private Idaho* features both of these men in central roles, it is not a love story between them, or a love story at all. Rather, it is a traditional, almost 1950s-like road movie in which two male characters journey not so much to find their places in the sun as their roots in the past and the sense of home that so eludes most characters in contemporary fiction. Van Sant has attempted to revamp this grossly over-used genre (which has always been fraught with homoerotic over-

Underground like a wild potato

Gus Van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho* may not be what you expected



River Phoenix as Mike Wayers in *My Private Idaho*

tones from Kerouac's *On the Road* to Dennis Hopper's pot-head epic *Easy Rider*) with odd religious and literary iconography. While both have added to the film's *sui generis* look and feel, neither makes it any queerer.

Part of the trouble in looking at *My Own Private Idaho* as a "gay film" is that it *isn't* a gay film, at least not in the usual sense of that over-used and under-explicated term. Much of what has been labeled a "gay male sensibility"—a loose collection of Western cultural artifacts that range from Michaelangelo's "David" to Shakespeare's *Sonnets* to Ronald

Firbank's *Valmouth* to Tennessee Williams's *Orpheus Descending* —has evidenced a heightened notion of male sexuality with a flight from traditional masculine gender goals. Narratives exhibiting this "gay male sensibility" have usually focused on a bonding of lovers (or brothers, if it was a closeted story) as well as a return to the mother (or some other recreation of the female principle). Van Sant is interested in neither of these themes in *My Own Private Idaho*, instead he focuses on the search for, and acceptance by, the father. Not a very gay theme in the tradi-

tion of gay sensibility.

Fathers—mythical and actual, accepting and rejecting—form the basis of the emotional content in *My Own Private Idaho*. Scott (Reeves) is a wealthy boy who has taken to the streets to spite his family, and Mike (Phoenix) is a near-orphan in constant search of family and his absent mother's love, even though any memory of his mother triggers a narcoleptic seizure.

During the course of the film, Scott gives up his street and hustling life (as well as his nurturing relationship with Mike) to *become* his own father; Mike, after attempting a reunion with his much older brother, discovers that this estranged sibling is also his *father*. In the world of *My Own Private Idaho*, fathers may be destructive or harmful, but they are inevitable.

It is no surprise that Van Sant has liberally peppered *My Own Private Idaho* with religious images because almost all religious films explore, in fact, a journey to "the father." The most common image in *My Own Private Idaho* is that of the "pieta" with the seizure-prone Mike as the dying or semi-dead Christ. Although some of these shots involve his long-lost mother, the most resonant feature Mike in the arms of the older, serene looking Scott. Van Sant is very conscious of this Christ theme and the most prolonged "pieta" scene takes place at the base of an historical monument in downtown Portland, Ore., that features the carved words, "The Coming of the White Man," a clear reference to—and pun upon—the second coming of Christ.

The endless road travelling of Mike and Scott also recalls 1950s pseudo-religious beefcake-toga-road movies *Quo Vadis*, *The Robe* and *The Silver Chalice*. Just as those neo-Christians were always on the road (to salvation as well as from Roman persecution), Mike and Scott are contemporary disciples looking for salvation to call their own.

Van Sant's traditional religious iconography is bookended by his equally predominant literary references, especially those to Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Parts I and II*. In a daring move, one that works only because of

Continued on page 10

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